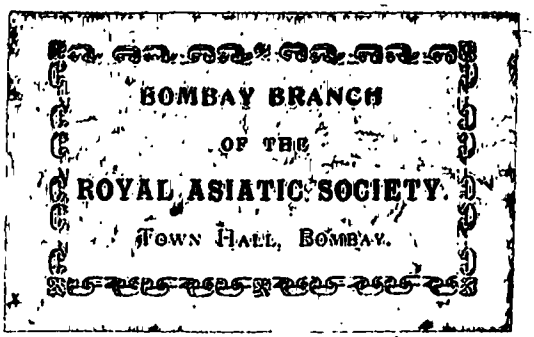

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Kurds charging, with Kettle-drummers leading. FRONTISPIECE.

GLIMPSES

OF

LIFE AND MANNERS IN PERSIA.

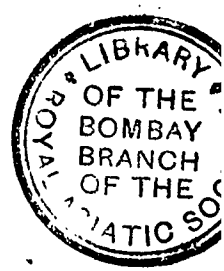
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BY LADY SHEIL.

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WITH NOTES ON RUSSIA, KOORDS, TOORKOMANS, NESTORIANS, KHIVA, AND PERSIA.

With Illustrations.



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JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.
1856.

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PREFACE.

Sir John Malcolm, Sir John M'Donald, Sir Robert Porter, Mr. Morier, and Mr. Fraser, have nearly exhausted the subject of Persia. The histories, the travels, and the novels of these distinguished writers have made the world acquainted with the literature, the geography, the commerce, and the antiquities of that country. The present volume is simply an attempt to describe the manners and the tone of feeling and society at the present day. There seemed at one moment a prospect that Persia would hold, as friend or foe, a prominent position before the English public. This anticipation led first to the production of these pages. Even now the altered aspect of political affairs may not perchance have deprived them of all interest.

The Notes attached to this volume are written by my husband. There are in Persia many subjects not accessible to female inquiry; yet the absence of all allusion to them, even in a trifling production like this, would render these pages more incomplete than, it may be feared, they actually are.

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GLIMPSES

OF

LIFE AND MANNERS IN PERSIA.

CHAPTER I.

Motive for writing this book — Our party — Progress to Berlin — Encounter with the police — Russian railroads — Arrival in Warsaw — General Lamoricière — Death of the Grand Duke Michael — Etiquette in the Emperor's Park — Theatre at Warsaw — Masourka — Audience with the Emperor Nicholas — Jews in Warsaw.

A FEW years ago it fell to my lot to make a journey to Persia, and to reside there nearly four years. At this moment, when public attention is so much directed to the East, I have thought my recollections of the scenes I have visited may not be without interest to a few readers. One advantage I enjoyed over many preceding travellers in Persia. I have been able to see the anderoons or harams of the Shah and some of the principal personages of his Court; and to judge, to a certain extent, with my own eyes, of the condition of women in that portion of the East.

Circumstances over which we had no control forced us to pursue the distant route of Poland and Russia, which, however, was to me rather a matter of rejoicing than otherwise, notwithstanding the fatigue and the prospect of climbing the Caucasus, perhaps in winter, as I knew that in all probability our return to England would be by

the more usual road of Turkish Armenia, which shall be described in its proper place. In this respect I must give my meed of praise to Russia, for, bad as may be the land of the "Moscovs," it is, for a lady-traveller, far to be preferred to Turkish Armenia. "The Lord deliver me from Sir Harry Vane!" might Cromwell exclaim; but I say, "The Lord deliver me from Turkish Armenia, its subterranean dwellings and their blinding smoke, with cows, buffaloes, sheep, goats, asses, horses, fleas, bugs, and other small deer unmentionable, for companions and comrades!"

On the 7th of August, 1849, after avoiding a formal leave-taking—that dreariest and most painful mode of seeking consolation at parting—we commenced our journey towards the land of the sun. We were a cumbrous party, consisting, besides my husband and myself, of three Irish and one French servant, and last, though far from least, our inseparable companion and cherished friend Crab, who, by his endearing ways, solaced afterwards many a weary hour, but who, alas! was not destined to revisit his native Scotland. He sleeps deep in the waters of Smyrna.*

A railway journey through Germany offers nothing new. Its tediousness is proverbial; and so special is the care of life and the resolution to prevent a catastrophe, that not even was Crab permitted to travel in our carriage, which was attached to the train. A night's rest at Cologne; a view of the cathedral, which has occupied the

* This was a Scotch terrier of great sagacity and most exemplary fidelity.

piety and contributions of Catholics for six hundred years, and which even yet is only a magnificent skeleton; an hour's hurried absence from the railway at Aix-la-Chapelle to see the tomb where Charlemagne reposes; another night's rest at the dear and bad hotel at Magdeburg, which all travellers should eschew,—and behold us at the sombre city of Berlin. Here we stayed a week to ascertain the movements of the Russian Court, which had passed the summer in Warsaw, and was preparing to return to Russia, whither it then seemed likely we should be obliged to proceed. The time was enlivened by an adventure which befell Crab and his master. Passing along the most public street one morning, Colonel S—— suddenly heard a yell from a voice he well knew, and, turning round, he saw Crab deposited under the arm of a stout man, having all the appearance of a workman. Fully convinced that nothing less than robbery was intended, he rushed to the rescue, and seized the thief by the throat, shouting with might and main the whole extent of his German vocabulary, "Der Hund ist mein—der Hund ist mein!" The thief seemed astonished at the assault, and immediately, in the same manner, grasped his assailant by the collar, but keeping fast hold of Crab, and calling loudly for help. In a moment a crowd assembled, and my husband found himself beset from all sides. An uproarious brawl followed; some of the townspeople seeming to support the foreigner, and others abetting the thief, Colonel S—— all the while gazing round in bewilderment, there being no one in the crowd who could speak English or French. At length up came the police in force and fear, thinking, no doubt, that

1848 was about to return. They made signals to Colonel S—— to accompany them to the police-office, where a person in authority pronounced Crab to have committed a heinous breach of the laws of Prussia in walking about the streets of Berlin without having his name and address labelled to his neck, for which delinquency he was sentenced to immediate execution, unless he saved his life by paying a dollar to the supposed thief, who turned out to be a police-agent in disguise. As for Colonel S——, he was told he was the aggressor, and that he was to consider himself lucky in escaping without further punishment. The Minister for Foreign Affairs sent him an apology, if it may be so termed, through our Chargé d'Affaires Mr. Howard, and an expression of regret at what had happened; but, as my husband said at the time, if he were the guilty man, why should there be an apology? and, if he were not, why was not punishment inflicted on the persons, whoever they were, who had joined in the row, and attacked him for trying to save his dog from a thief? I must own I felt great indignation, but he treated the matter very lightly, saying it was nothing but a street brawl, which might have happened to any one anywhere.

At length, at the end of August, we gladly continued our journey.. At the Polish frontier we passed the night at a miserable inn in the village of Mitlowitz; a night of discomfort, which gave one a foretaste of what we might expect farther on. There was but one small bed, and the servants slept on benches covered with leather, and without blankets; this seeming to be the ordinary manner of treating servants in Russia, where for them a stove

answers the purpose of bed and blanket. Next morning, at an early hour, we resumed our seats on the Russian railway. If in Germany this mode of travelling be tedious in comparison with England—the tortoise to the hare—here it was infinitely worse, the tortoise had become a snail. The pace, although a fast train, did not exceed ten or twelve miles an hour, and we stopped every ten minutes to deliver letters, or else to refresh ourselves with vodka—the eternal vodka—which name one hears as often as "la goutte" in France. I think I recollect being told that the only fuel used on this railway is wood, which perhaps is one reason why they go so slowly. But let me do justice to a Russian railway. If it is slow, it is safe. No "shocking catastrophe," no "awful collision," no "smashing," is heard of in that country. All is calm, deliberate, and safe, with a complete exemption from the agitation, nervousness, and excitement which the mere sight of a railway produces in England.

"Chi va piano, va sano;
Chi va forte, va alla morte,"

say the Italians, and the couplet seems to have been written in anticipation of the locomotive character of the respective countries of Russia and England. In another particular, too, does a Russian as well as a German railway excel that of England,—I mean the accommodation afforded to second-class travellers. This is really so comfortable that few persons, unless the highest and most wealthy, make use of the first-class accommodation; while in England, with all our boasting of equality, &c., the carriages seem to be contrived with such studious

discomfort that people of moderate means are forced to undergo inconvenient expenses by travelling in the first-class carriage.

Our fellow-travellers were a wounded and rather discontented Russian general, two aides-de-camp of the Emperor Nicholas, and one of Marshal Prince Paskewitch, Viceroy of Poland, all returning from the war in Hungary, which had just terminated. The latter were very agreeable men, with excellent manners, like, I am told, Russians in general of their rank. They spoke but little of the war, or of the scenes they had just quitted, and during the time we were in their company, politics and every allusion to public events were carefully avoided; but music, the court, the opera, and such light subjects they discussed copiously and agreeably.

Late in the evening of September 1st, we reached Warsaw, where we were most kindly received by the late excellent General Du Plat, then Consul-General in that city. With great difficulty we found apartments in an execrable Polish inn, the only tolerable hotel being full, and occupied by General Lamoricière, who was then Envoy to the Emperor from the President Louis Napoleon. I had not the good fortune to make the acquaintance of this famous commander, whose exile from his native land is so much to be deplored at this moment. My husband, however, saw him more than once, and preserves a pleasant recollection of a stout little man, full of resolution, energy, and life.

I have no agreeable remembrances of my sojourn in Warsaw. We were very uncomfortably lodged, and so ill fed, that every day we were forced to go to a café to

seek a dinner, and besides I was suffering from a severe cold. Warsaw must always be an object of melancholy interest from historical associations, and from being the representative of fallen greatness and blighted independence; but, to the mere cursory traveller, it presents few materials for the indulgence of curiosity, unless it be the interior of society, which my short stay gave me no opportunity of enjoying. Thus much I learned, that between the Pole and the Russian there was a marked line, which allowed of but little or no amalgamation between the two races, and that the Pole shrunk unbendingly from the society of his conquerors. The period of our visit to Warsaw was one of gloom and affliction to the Imperial family. The Grand Duke Michael, the Emperor's brother, towards whom he is said to have borne the tenderest regard and affection, was stretched on the bed of grievous illness, which soon was to become the bed of death. His Imperial Highness died at Warsaw during our stay in that city, and this event interrupted, of course, the usual intercourse of society, and deprived me of an opportunity of seeing the Court or any portion of the Imperial family. Nearly every day while the Grand Duke lived, a notice used to be sent to the various foreign officers in Warsaw, that a grand review was to be held in the morning, at which the Emperor invited their attendance, and invariably during the night we were awakened by an orderly bearing an announcement that, owing to the condition of the Grand Duke, the review was postponed. I thus lost the sight of a fine military pageant of 50,000 or 60,000 men, headed by an Emperor in person.

It was not among the Imperial household alone, that the angel of death had cast his dart. Mourning and grief had also spread their veil of sorrow over the family of the Emperor's trusty servant Count Nesselrode, whose wife had recently died, and who was living in seclusion with his daughters. It was a disappointment to lose the occasion I might otherwise have enjoyed, of seeing the veteran statesman who has for half a century borne so prominent a share in guiding the destinies of Russia, and materially influencing those of Europe. My husband, who saw the Grand Chancellor of Russia, as I believe he is now styled, more than once, described him to be a man of small stature, slight in figure, with a clever, intellectual countenance, full of keenness and mobility, which once must have been handsome. His manners are said to be most courteous and cordial. The Chancellor is presumed to be of German descent, like many other members of the Russian diplomatic service, among whom may be cited Count Pahlen, Baron Meyendorf, Baron Budberg, Count Medem, Count Alex. Medem, Baron Brunow, General Du Hamel, &c.

We often strolled in the pretty park where the Emperor was residing, and which was open to the public. Whatever opinion may be entertained of his Majesty's character on various points, he certainly possessed a fearless mind. In Moscow and Petersburg one can imagine he might free himself from the trouble and annoyance of watching over the preservation of his life; but I was not prepared to see him equally unguarded, and heedless, in the very heart of Polish enthusiasm and hate. Few or no guards were visible near the simple edifice which was

selected as the abode of the Emperor, who seemed to consider the prestige of his fame and dignity an invulnerable panoply—as, in fact, it really appeared to be, no attempt having ever been made in Warsaw against his life. The trees were decorated with coloured lamps in anticipation of a grand fête, destined never to take place, and which was put off from day to day, or rather from night to night, in vain anticipation of a favourable change in the Grand Duke's health. These decorations had a forlorn and sad appearance, I thought. The immediate vicinity of the Palace was surrounded by a pretty flower-garden, which we wished to examine, but on entering it we were stopped by the sentry at the gate, who made significant gestures to my husband to remove his hat while walking before the palace, lest by some accident the Emperor might be looking out of the window, and his eyes might fall on some one with his head covered! The "orgueil Britannique" of Colonel S—— would not allow him to submit to a ceremonial, which seemed to savour too much of the Imperial "middle kingdom," so he declined compliance, and we went another way, not a little surprised at the demand; but afterwards, while residing at a house of Prince Woronzow's, at Vladi Kafkaz, we were still more surprised to observe the soldiers saluting his house too as they passed before the windows, he being at the time at Odessa; yet such was the etiquette.

Amid the general gloom of society, the theatre, during the early part of our residence, fortunately offered us some resource. The scenery and decorations were excellent, the acting good and spirited, equal to the theatrical representations one finds in a large provincial town in

France. The audience was numerous and attentive, seeming to enjoy highly the comedy, which generally formed the subject of the evening's entertainment; but which, being in Polish, was to us a sealed book. It was the Masourka, however, which drew forth unanimous and most vociferous enthusiasm, particularly from the Russian officers with whom the pit was crowded. Well was this beautiful national dance—truly beautiful as danced at Warsaw—entitled to all their boisterous and passionate applause. The women engaged in the dance were all dressed in the becoming national costume; and one young lady, remarkable above the others for her beauty, her elegant toilette, and the energy of her performance, which almost rivalled the vigour of a Sevillana stamping the boleras, threw the house into a perfect tumult of delight. The men too were dressed in the costume of Poland in the day of her independence and military renown—perhaps the garb of John Sobieski himself. Each dancer wore the heavy long boots and spurs, and the ponderous sabre, without which the Polish noble never appeared in public. At every movement of the dance they sharply struck their boots and spurs together, as if beating time—converting the peaceful and graceful masourka of our ball-rooms into a genuine war-dance, in which, with hand and foot, they were heartily joined by the Russian officers, who for the moment seemed to forget their hatred of everything Polish.

Though both these Sclavonic languages are sprung from the same origin, the roughness of the Polish in comparison with Russian was very striking during the performance of the comedy. Russian seems to be the Italian

of the Sclavonic tongues, and is really harmonious to the ear. But in Polish organs of speech there appears to exist an incomprehensible faculty of enunciating at will any possible number of the most incongruous consonants without the intervention of a vowel. The Russian aide-de-camp told me that even to a Russian, with all his organic flexibility, and his power of acquiring languages, the pronunciation of Polish presented difficulties hardly to be overcome.

Though I did not enjoy the honour of presentation to the Emperor, it may be perhaps interesting that I should record here the impressions of my husband when he paid his respects to his Imperial Majesty. After alighting at the palace, where only a single sentry was to be seen, he was shown into a room in which were two officers, one of whom was Marshal Paskewitch. He then passed into another chamber, very simply furnished, where he remained, expecting an aide-de-camp to conduct him to the Emperor's presence. Soon a tall, portly officer, very plainly dressed in uniform, with remarkably small epaulettes, entered the room; and it was only after some moments that my husband knew he was in the presence of the descendant of Ruric, the mighty autocrat of all the Russias. A shake of the hand, accompanied by a gracious smile of welcome, did not contribute to undeceive my husband, who was not prepared for a reception so far removed from state and formality. The Emperor remained standing during the audience, which lasted ten minutes; he was most gracious and affable. He condescended to express regret that Colonel S—— should not have come to his court at a more favourable moment,

alluding to his "brother," to use his Majesty's own expression, whose condition, he said, was hopeless.

The dignity of the Emperor, with the mien of conscious greatness and power accompanying every action and look, made a great impression on my husband, who remarked, however, that in his Majesty's eyes, which were large and protruding, there was an air of restlessness, or even wildness, far from agreeable. The spirit as well as the blood of Paul may have been in that majestic frame; for what is unbounded pride but mental aberration?

This audience afforded an opportunity for observing, that even now the Russians have not forgotten their Eastern origin. Colonel S—— being dressed in uniform, General Du Plat insisted on enveloping him in his largest cloak, as he would otherwise have been exposed to the derision of the Russian officers. In other countries soldiers are as fond as women of displaying their feathers and finery; but in Russia, an officer, the moment he puts on his uniform, carefully hides himself under an enormous grey coat, which his ancestors must have borrowed from their Moghul conquerors. This reminds me of an anecdote I heard in Persia. At the negotiations which followed the conclusion of one of Persia's disastrous wars with Russia, the plenipotentiary of the latter country thought fit to indulge in a little banter, at the expense of Persian manners, morals, integrity, &c., in comparison with those of Europe. The Persian negotiator at length lost patience, and exclaimed, "Why do you talk so much about Europe, as if you Russians were Europeans? You put on a hat and trousers, and fancy yourselves Feringhees; but what are you after all, but the de-

scendants of the refuse of Batou Khan's army and his Moghuls?"

"Poland is said to be the paradise of the Jews; and, judging by their number, both in Warsaw and on our line of road, even as far as Odessa, the sway of the Czars appears to possess large attractions in their estimation. Every trade seems to be filled up by them, though they have not acquired a better reputation in their dealings than they possessed in England in former days. Inn-keeping is one of their favourite employments—perhaps from the opportunity it affords for retaliating on the Gentile some of the numerous wrongs they have so long endured from him all over the world. But a brighter time is no doubt approaching for the sons of Israel. If France has been first in rendering justice to that capacity for all the arts and sciences which a distinguished writer claims for that race, we may trust that ere long in our own country the career to honour and distinction will be unreservedly laid open to their abilities. In the mean time, however, nothing can exceed the misery of their apparent condition in Poland. They are dressed in rags, dirty in their persons, and their whole appearance is disagreeable, if not revolting. Peter the Great is said to have objected to the residence of the sons of Israel in his dominions, lest, thought that sagacious Czar, they should contaminate the rectitude of the inhabitants of "Holy Russia" by teaching them chicanery and intrigue. The chief of the house of Romanoff had only an indistinct perception of the faculties of his countrymen. We had some dealings with a few of this race before our departure from Warsaw, in which we were much defrauded.

At Warsaw we were regarded as persons going into exile; and if we had bought all we were advised as indispensable, a large fourgon should also have been provided, to hold the beds, bedding, basons, tea-urns, saucepans, and various other domestic batteries. We did, however, purchase a stock of provisions to mitigate the famine with which we were threatened on the road. I may remark here, that the foregoing appurtenances are considered necessary by Russian families travelling in their own country.

Despotic power is sometimes capricious. The Jewish ladies in Poland have fallen under its influence in a manner which has certainly contributed to improve their appearance. Formerly, when a girl was married, the custom was to shave her head completely, and she wore instead of her own hair, a brown or black silk fillet. By an imperial ukase the Emperor has ordained, that the Jewish women shall not shave their heads, nor wear these very unbecoming fillets.

In the church, on Sunday, I observed some country girls with wreaths of real flowers on their heads, which had not the effect of overcoming their natural plainness. The men wear robes like dressing-gowns; and I could not help laughing at the curious effect which a man ploughing in a dressing-gown, produced. I afterwards became accustomed to this style of garment, for it is worn all over the East.

CHAPTER II.

Departure from Warsaw — Feldt Yäger — Russian post-houses — Gytomir — Kief — St. Sophia — Baptism in the Dnieper — Suspension bridge over the Dnieper — Progress to Odessa — Appearance of the people — Jewish Synagogue — Odessa — Prince Woronzow.

IT is time to leave Warsaw, where we have been detained too long, and to commence our tedious journey to Odessa. The extreme kindness of Count Nesselrode had diminished some of its difficulties by assigning us a non-commissioned officer of the Feldt Yäger (or Government Messenger) department, whose knowledge of languages, however, being confined to German and Russian, we were not only completely in his hands as far as our dealings with the people of the country were concerned, but we were hardly able to communicate our wants and wishes. His presence certainly relieved us from embarrassment, for in Russia a Feldt Yäger is nearly as powerful at the post-houses as the Czar himself. His proper duty was to drive in advance, furnished with his courierski padrojna, which enabled him to claim horses for us, to the exclusion of all other travellers, even if they had been harnessed to their carriages, and to prepare horses at the next stage. He travelled in an exceedingly light uncovered waggon, without springs, called a pavoska, drawn by three horses abreast, of which the centre horse invariably trots, while the two others gallop. It is in this manner that the de-

spatches of the Government are rapidly conveyed all over the empire. The Russians will tell you that these couriers often travel at the rate of more than 300 miles a day for ten successive days, which must be one of the exaggerations in which Russians occasionally indulge. Be it as it may, these couriers are indefatigable, and so great are the fatigues they endure in these shocking waggons, that few among them live to an advanced time of life; and moreover, being obliged to travel in all weathers, night and day, fair and foul, many perish in the snow. To them alone is conceded the cruel privilege of forcing the horses forward till they drop or die from fatigue. Our Feldt Yäger was not one of these reckless characters. On the contrary, he often retarded our progress by feigning that the stables were empty and no horses to be had, in the mean time indulging himself in a sound sleep for some hours, indifferent to our impatience and to the subsequent detection of his falsehood. At other times he would stealthily remain behind at night, leaving the Russian postilions to crawl along as they pleased, and then join us rapidly next morning. In short, the benefit of his guidance was not without alloy.

The tendency to exaggeration alluded to above, as seen in many Russians, may, it seems to me, be traced to credulity as much as to any other source. I remember in Persia a Russian gentleman, of great gravity and holding a high official appointment, who, when expatiating on the sagacity of the wolves in his country, used solemnly to assert, that they were accustomed to swallow a large quantity of earth to make themselves heavy preparatory to seizing a cow by the tail. The weight of the earth

added to that of the wolf soon rendered the unsuspecting victim a prey to the calculating marauder. This gentleman was a native of Little Russia, where they are said to have a faith that ought to remove the Himalayas themselves.

We occupied five dreary days and nights in reaching Kief, our road lying through immense plains, intermingled with prodigious forests, and enlivened here and there with large tracts of cultivation, though with a scanty population, which in some of the villages, consisted entirely of Jews. Twice each day we stopped at the wretched post-houses to partake of the fare they afforded, which rarely exceeds tea, eggs, and bread, diversified in Russia with that detestable Muscovite concoction called stehee, which is a broth composed of hot water, tallow, cabbage, and salt. These places never contained beds; a bare floor, a wooden bench without cushions, a few wooden chairs, were their sole attractions to a traveller. These humble accommodations were compensated by civility, cordiality, and a cheerful alacrity to remedy every deficiency. Gytomir, half way between Warsaw and Kief, where we arrived September 27th, was to us an oasis in the desert. At this town we found a bustling inn, where we were delighted to recruit ourselves with a dinner of welcome beefsteaks, our single meal for five days, and English porter, for which beverage the Russians entertain even more devotion than our own countrymen. The merits of Meux, Barclay, and Guinness are as shrewdly scanned by them as those of Lafitte and Château Margaux, in a London dining-room. Five days and nights passed in a carriage, even with the advantage of its being what our Irish servant called a

"dormouse," were no small trial, and glad we were, tired and travelworn, to get sight of the "Mother of Russian cities," as Kief from its antiquity is styled, situated on a high bank overlooking the Dnieper. Our Feldt Yäger explained our slow progress by invectives against the Polish postilions, who were, he said, of violent temper, and would not allow themselves to be flogged or abused. "But wait," he continued, until we enter Russia, "and there I can do as I please." He certainly kept his promise, both with whip and tongue.

We were most kindly received in Kief at the house of Mr. Vignolles, whose hospitality saved us from the vexation and discomforts of a Russian inn, not the least of whose miseries was the incessant conflict to be waged with the bloodthirsty nomadic tribes which abound in Russian dormitories at that season of the year.

Fatigue had so overcome my strength, that I was glad to devote to repose, nearly the whole of the three days we spent at Kief; and I am ashamed to be obliged to confess to the indolence of not having seen its chief curiosity, the catacombs, where the remains of so many saints of the Russian calendar are laid. This city is to the Russo-Greek Church what Rome is to Catholics, and the Church of St. Sophia (the oldest in Russia, it is said) is the Russian St. Peter's, though mighty is the difference. It is a very picturesque building, or rather collection of buildings, and as rich as abundance of gilding both inside and out can make it. We were deeply gratified by the solemn chanting of the Russian monks, which surpassed, in my opinion, in religious grandeur and effect, the elaborate and scientific psalmody of St. Peter's. At Moscow,

and above all, St. Petersburg, the church music is described as magnificent—the exclusion of all other than vocal music in the Greek Church having naturally directed all the efforts of the priesthood to excellence in this branch of harmony. The service was said to be in old Sclavonic, which is equally unintelligible to the people at large, as Latin to the majority in the Catholic Church. The same means of translated prayer-books adopted throughout the Catholic world, are probably taken in the Eastern Church to remedy the inconvenience. We were informed that the grand festivals of the Church are celebrated at Petersburg, Moscow, and Kief, with a gorgeousness far surpassing the most imposing solemnities at Rome. The appearance of the priests at Kief was deeply impressive. Their long locks and venerable beards gave them an apostolic air, much at variance with our ideas of clerical propriety and smoothness of face, at the present day.

Kief is said to have been a great city before the invasion of the Moghuls, by whom it was utterly destroyed. It was here, 800 years ago, that Vladimir the Great forced the whole population to embrace Christianity by baptizing them by a simultaneous plunge in the Dnieper. The present town, like every city in Russia, where land is abundant and population scanty, is spread over a large extent. With the stately Dnieper flowing at its feet, the neighbouring hills, the forest and the steppe in the distance, the gilded domes of the churches glittering and sparkling on all sides, it scarcely justifies the uncourteous remark of the English Ambassador to Catherine the Second, that the aspect of the city was detestable.

The Dnieper seems to be half a mile in width, opposite

to the city. Mr. Vignolles was employed in the arduous undertaking of building a splendid bridge over this fine river, by a contract which he had concluded with the Russian Government. His operations had converted Kief into a small English colony, from the numerous artisans whom Mr. Vignolles had brought from England to contribute their practical skill to his science. This monument of distinguished English talent was not more than half built when we saw it. The great difficulty to be surmounted was the increased weight and rapidity of the Dnieper in spring. Mr. Vignolles had suffered a heavy loss in the previous season. The melting snow and ice had filled the Dnieper, which rolled and rushed against the columns of the rising bridge with overwhelming fury, and in a moment 30,000*l.* were dissipated, and the labour and anxieties of two years scattered to the winds and waves. Mr. Vignolles was full of confidence in his power to baffle all the insurrections of the Dnieper, and I hear that he has succeeded in accomplishing his arduous undertaking. Returning from inspecting Mr. Vignolles's curious works, we drove in a carriage over the Russian strange contrivance for connecting the two banks of the Dnieper. This consisted of thick planks floating in the water, placed closely side by side, like a raft, across the whole breadth of the river, and braced by bands of rope together. At each movement of the wheels and of the horses, these planks sank into the water, sometimes to an alarming depth; but though the passage looked hazardous, it was free from danger. Notwithstanding its size and volume of water at Kief, it is to be lamented that this fine stream should contribute so little to the wants of the daily in-

creasing civilization of the tracts through which it rolls its course. Its cataracts, the shallows at its mouth, its shifting sands, which change the passage from year to year, all concur to render its navigation difficult and its commerce comparatively insignificant. At Mr. Vignolles's table, it was more than once a subject of discussion among his intelligent sons and assistants, whether the impediments caused by the cataracts could not be surmounted, among other ways, by a canal conducted from above the falls. When the temple of Janus shall be happily closed, let us hope the sovereign of Russia may find leisure to solve this problem.

With the fear of the Caucasus before our eyes, and nervously anxious to anticipate a heavy fall of snow, we hastened to continue our journey. My husband had frightened me with a description of a passage of these mountains during winter, which he had performed some years before. The mountaineers had cut a passage through the snow exactly the breadth of the sledge, with three fiery courier horses abreast. Above was a wall of snow several hundred feet high, and which the least gust of wind would bring down in an overwhelming avalanche, while on the outside, was a precipice many hundred feet deep, and quite perpendicular, which the sledge partially overhung. To add to his enjoyment of the sublimity of the scene, my husband had the satisfaction to find himself seated on the outer side of the sledge, while the inner seat was occupied by his servant. The cold was of such intensity that he saw, or thought he saw, the air in motion, dancing and jumping in the minutest and most brilliant particles, which he said must have been the original indi-

visible atoms from which modern philosophy has framed the universe. In passing by the spot afterwards, and seeing how terrible it was even in fine autumn weather, I rejoiced we had hurried on, in spite of fatigue, to escape the snow.

If in Poland we were struck by a general air of poverty amounting to squalor, in Russia we were surprised to find an appearance of comfort and the enjoyment of at least the necessaries of life. Kief contained few or no beggars; all, both in the city and in the country, seemed to have employment, and to be comfortably clothed and fed. These remarks are applicable to the whole of the Russian dominions, in Europe at least, which came under our observation, and the effect is rendered more striking by the immediate contrast with Poland. From what cause does this difference arise? It cannot be owing apparently to the immense superabundance of soil in Russia over the population, for in Poland the inhabitants are not numerous, nor is there a deficiency of land.

Soon after leaving Kief we entered on the steppe, which we traversed almost up to Odessa. Contrary to my expectation, we found large tracts of meadow, and even of tillage, though at distant intervals. In fact, instead of being a barren plain, as I had been led to imagine, the steppe may be described as a grassy level, or prairie, highly susceptible of cultivation, and covered with aromatic herbs in early summer. We were four days and nights on this part of our expedition, but the severe experience of the journey from Warsaw had inured us to hardship, and we travelled in comparative ease and comfort, though without encountering any objects of

interest. During a change of horses at a small town on the Saturday we went into a Jewish synagogue, and were received with great civility. The congregation was numerous, the room crowded beyond endurance, the odour intolerable, and the confusion great; the flock, both men and women, being intently engaged in the perusal of the Bible, which each person read aloud, perhaps each a different chapter. The heads of the men were covered, though, no doubt, their feet were bare.

At Odessa, where we arrived at the end of September, we had our first specimen of a Russian hotel, of which the less said the better, unless to exclaim with Dante, "Guarda e passa." We however forgave a great deal of what was defective, disagreeable, and indecorous, on finding that our landlord spoke Turkish, with which my husband was well acquainted. This fortunate circumstance released us at once from the thraldom of the Feldt Yäger, from which we had suffered much vexation. Odessa being a modern city, it contains few edifices of historic or traditional note. Like other Russian towns of recent construction, the streets are wide and regular. The large number of new and excellent houses in preparation showed evident signs of wealth and increasing commerce. We had the pleasure of forming here the acquaintance of Prince Woronzow; the Lieutenant of the Emperor, with nearly absolute authority over the immense tract reaching from the Pruth to the Caspian. He is a man of great wealth, and has ever preserved a reputation for the highest honour. In appearance and manners, he altogether resembles an Englishman of the highest class, and the illusion is completed by the perfection with which his

Highness (for to that elevated title has he attained) speaks the English language. He invited us to pass a day at his beautiful palace at Aloupka, in the Crimea, whither he was to proceed that day, while we were to follow in a Russian war steamer, to sail the ensuing morning with passengers to Sebastopol, Kertch, &c. We passed the day in strolling through the town and in looking at the well-supplied shops, and closed our ramble by lounging in the pretty promenade overhanging the sea, of which it commands a fine view, as well as of the picturesque rock on which the castle is built.

CHAPTER III.

Russian steamboat — Our fellow-passengers — Russian resources for passing the time — 'Mes Mémoires' — Sebastopol — Balaclava — Crimean scenery — Yalta — Aloupka — Wine-making in the Crimea — Russian ladies in distress — Tartar bandit — Jews in the Crimea — Simpheropol — Kaffa — Kertch — Museum — Passage to Taman.

NEXT morning we embarked in the steamer, which proved to be an excellent boat, having been, we were told, built in England. Her captain was scarcely entitled to command her, as will presently be seen. The company in the saloon was numerous, consisting of princes and princesses, counts and countesses, colonels, and captains, and fiddlers, and ladies and gentlemen of every degree, and of manners as various as their positions. I was little prepared for the familiarity and good fellowship which, without loss of time, were established among all parties. It seems strange that in Russia, where there may be said to be only two classes, the noble and the non-noble, the process of amalgamation should be so much more rapid and easy than in England; perhaps the reason may be found in the immense difference which is recognised between the two classes, and which enables the Russian noble to condescend to familiarity without risk, just as we see in England a man of rank vouchsafes to be jocular with a peasant, while he shrinks from any approach to familiarity with a man higher in the scale. Whatever be

the cause, the fact was fully exemplified on this occasion, and no one could complain that reserve was among the demerits of our lady passengers. The weather was beautiful, permitting a large consumption of time in eating and drinking of very good fare in both kinds, diversified with cards and scandal. When these pastimes palled, these frolicsome princes and princesses determined on edifying each other by relating their memoirs. Prince ——, a remarkably tall, stout representative of the interminable family of the —— (every second prince one meets in Russia being of this genuine Sclavonian stock), took the lead, and gravely produced to an admiring circle of his countrywomen, a large manuscript entitled 'Mes Mémoires.' It was curious to observe that even in conversing among themselves, French was the only language spoken by these Russian ladies and gentlemen. Many among the former were handsome. Beauty in Russia seems a good deal dependent on race. Those sprung from purely Sclavonic blood, or from the descendants of Rurik's companions, differ little in regularity of feature and expression of countenance from the handsomest races of Europe. But the least tinge of the Tartar taint is as difficult to efface as that of Africa; the little elongated eye, the spreading nostril, the thick lip, and the unhealthy jaundiced hue, are sure to be revealed more or less.

Among the ladies was the Countess ——, a particularly handsome woman, strikingly graceful and attractive. She lived at the same inn that we occupied in Odessa, and wrote a most pressing note to my husband, expressing her strong desire to call on him relative to some important business. He, thinking it would be more polite

to take the initiative, went to her apartment, where he was rather surprised to find that this important business consisted of some absurd claim, which her deceased husband possessed some thirty years ago to the Persian order of the Lion and Sun, and which claim she desired to make good, as she heard the decoration bestowed was sometimes of value. It was only after a long delay he succeeded in evading her importunity. Prince Woronzow was also threatened by this lady with a visit, and he immediately went to her apartment, as there at all events he had a fair chance of making his escape. It appeared she was in the habit of travelling in company with a Russian fiddler. On board, the Countess became, in common with the rest of her countrywomen, very familiar with the facetious Prince who had amused the company with the recital of his adventures. She came up to my husband full of smiles and graces, and told him she had been most fortunate in undertaking the voyage at this juncture, as she had the happiness of meeting with two cousins on board, one being the Prince, and the other "ce Monsieur," said she, introducing the fiddler—"il est artiste." We afterwards met him at dinner at Aloupka, but without the Countess. It would be very rash to infer from this debonair lady's free and easy manners, that she was to be considered as a fair specimen of the Russian ladies.

Having touched at Eupatoria, we did not reach Sebastopol until next day. In the morning a heavy fog severely tried the nautical skill of our commander, which however was insufficient to prevent our vessel from running on

shore, close to where the battle of the Alma must have been fought, but owing to the smoothness of the sea we escaped unscathed. Even then we could not look on the fortifications of the harbour of Sebastopol, with their long array of guns, without interest, or without speculating who would be the first enemy they would be called on to repel. The two hours we spent in this memorable fortress were devoted to rambling through the clean and well-built streets, under the guidance of a Russian naval officer, whom we accidentally met, and who kindly obtained permission from the governor, or the admiral, to be our cicerone in seeing what was deemed curious, and perhaps in not letting us see more than was necessary. He conducted us from one large building to another, and from one immense ship to another—among them, the pride of the Russian navy, the "Twelve Apostles." I derived no pleasure from the excursion; indeed I felt heartily tired, though now I congratulate myself on the fortunate chance which led me to a place of imperishable remembrance in the world's records.

It was night when we sailed round Cape Chersonese, the southern point of the Crimea, and thus we lost the sight of the beautiful landscapes on the south coast, though we were so close to the shore as to be able to see the entrance to the ever-memorable Balaclava. It blew hard during the night, raising the sea as well as exciting great commotion amidst our lively princes and princesses. Among the first to suffer was our commander. That bold man of war, who fondly believed himself to bear some likeness to an English naval officer, after struggling

for a time, lay helpless and prostrate, but sought comfort and encouragement in the remembrance that mighty Nelson himself to the last was liable to the same mishap. A brilliant morning saw us at anchor at a short distance from the little town of Yalta, with all the lovely scenery of the southern Crimea in full view. Hills covered with verdure down to the sea, woods, interminable vineyards, hamlets, and villas, formed a scene not easily forgotten, and brought to mind the garden of the world, —Italy, and all its beauties.

Well might that excellent traveller, Clarke, call the southern coast of this peninsula a paradise, if all he says be true of the continual streams of limpid water gushing from the mountain side, fertilising the gardens with a perpetual bloom and cooling the heated atmosphere, the soil a hotbed of vegetable productions, no reptiles, no venomous insects, and, above all, no unwholesome exhalations, of which, in another place, he says the soil is so fruitful at Inkerman, Balaclava, &c. Would that our sick soldiers had been able to find here a respite from the deadly fevers of Sebastopol! change of air or season being the only efficacious cure for the fever of malaria.

An aide-de-camp of Prince Woronzow soon appeared on board to convey us on shore, where no less than two phaëtons and four, if not six, awaited us, and soon transported us, at Russian pace, through the varied landscapes bordering the coast, back to Aloupka, which we had passed during the night.

The sight of this gorgeous mansion struck us with surprise. We were aware of the magnificence of Russian nobles, but did not expect to behold a palace which in

size and splendour can vie with the most lordly dwellings of England. It is constructed in a style half Gothic, half Moorish. The Oriental Hall, as it is designated, is devoted to the morning reception of the numerous company which is always assembled during the residence of the "Lieutenant of the Emperor," and is equally splendid and delightful, overlooking the beautiful gardens and pleasure-grounds reaching to the sea, of which there is a fine prospect. I admired the exquisite taste with which the vases were filled with flowers and fruit, and I was told that the Princess had her reception-rooms and boudoir decorated every day by a painter with fresh fruit and flowers. It well deserves the proud inscription on the Imperial Palace at Delhi, which we afterwards sent from Tehran in the most elaborate Persian writing, to be affixed over the entrance of this apartment:—

"Agher ferdows der rooe Zameen ast,
Hameen asto, hameen asto, hameen ast."

"If on earth there Eden be,
It is this, it is this, it is this."

Our princely entertainer, princely in every sense of the word, and Princess Woronzow, a Polish lady of the noble house of Branitzka, devoted the day to our amusement in showing us all over the estate, an operation of no small fatigue from its extent, and from its being, not hill and dale, but all hill and no dale—like Queen Elizabeth's celebrated portrait, all light and no shadow. Everything was in the highest order and perfection, thanks to the Prince's manager and bailiff, a thoroughly active and intelligent Englishman, whom we had the pleasure of meet-

ing. His librarian, too, was an Englishman. It was, however, his vineyard and winepresses which the Prince exhibited with exultation, as they are chiefly of his own creation. The Crimea has a debt of gratitude to pay this patriotic nobleman. The vineyards are of immense extent, producing every kind of grape, all introduced by Prince Woronzow. The varieties of the vines, collected from all parts of the world, are not less than two or three hundred. The wine manufactured on the Prince's estate is said to be exceedingly good, though not equalling in flavour its prototypes of Champagne and Bordeaux. The Crimean Barsac, Sauterne, and vin de Grave have a high reputation. The Prince's wine-makers were two garrulous Frenchmen, father and son, from the banks of the Garonne. The elder Frenchman announced that next day was his birthday, and insisted on receiving a remembrance of his *fête* from the Prince; who at once kindly consented, remarking, however, that this festival seemed to occur much oftener than once a year. The greatest curiosity shown us was a Tartar village close to the house. The inhabitants, men and women, came out to receive and salute their ruler, who addressed them with much cordiality. The Prince said they were quiet, good people. They were very poor, very dirty, and very ugly.

At night a numerous party assembled at dinner; the guests could not have been less than fifty—a number stated to be unusually small. The company was said to be somewhat motley, according to the common practice of Russian noblemen, who are said to be regardless of the rank of their guests, further than giving to each a higher or lower-placed seat at table, and more or less costly fare,

in proportion to his social status. The wines were numerous and excellent, all supplied from the Prince's own estate at Aloupka.

A few visitors came later in the evening, among whom was a French gentleman, long established in the country. He spoke warmly in favour of the Russian peasantry, their intelligence, their industry, their knowledge of their rights, and their tenacity in maintaining them.

Next morning after breakfast we bade adieu to Aloupka. Fair befall its lovely bowers and radiant halls! May it be safe from the ravages of war, and the presence of the spider and the owl! as I remember having read in my Persian studies—

> "Perdehdaree mee kooned der kasr e kaïsar ankeboot,
> Nowbet mee zaned boom der goombed e Afrasiab."
>
> "The spider weaves his web in the halls of the Cæsars,
> The owl tolls his knell in the dome of Afrasiab."

This being Sunday, we attended church at the house of Prince Narishkin, part of whose family belongs to the Catholic Church, and who maintains in his establishment a clergyman of that religion. Their estate adjoins that of Prince Woronzow, and is almost equally beautiful.

We passed here a few agreeable hours in the society of this family and their visitors. Russians, of that class at all events, seem to make it their study to render themselves attractive to foreigners, and I am told they feel greater anxiety to leave a good impression on English than on other travellers, not, I conjecture, from any special liking towards us, for that, I am persuaded, they do not entertain, however much they may esteem and confide in individual character.

That they do confide in our honour much more than in that of their own countrymen, I have a strong conviction. I remember hearing of a Russian gentleman at Tehran who gave a sum of money to an English officer, to procure some finery for his wife, from India. This gentleman being on the point of leaving Tehran, he told the officer to avoid carefully letting his purchases fall into the hands of a Russian, as he should then certainly never see them. Another Russian, wishing to send some specimens of Persian manufacture to his brother in Europe, instead of forwarding them through the Russian Minister in Constantinople, who was his intimate acquaintance, begged a member of the English Mission to convey them to the English Consul at the latter city, for transmission to their destination. Yet both these men, particularly the first, were inveterately anti-English.

We saw at this time an odd example of the commercial, money-making spirit of the Russian nobility, who, however, it must be admitted, are equally willing to spend as to gain. The person I allude to was a man of large landed property, teeming with serfs. Not satisfied with this fruitful source of wealth, Prince —— adopted the whim of turning sugar manufacturer, for which purpose he constructed a large establishment. Finding the profits scanty, the prince abandoned sugar-making, and was busily engaged when we saw him, in plans for founding a manufactory for paper. Nobody seemed to think there was anything unusual in these pursuits. The prince's want of luck, or skill, or wisdom, was all they thought of.

Surfeited with Russian navigation, and anxious to see something more of the Crimea, we determined to travel

by land through the interior of the country to Kertch. One of the advantages of Russian travelling is, that, go where you will, from north to south, from east to west, from Warsaw to Kamschatka, from the Samoides to Persia, post-horses abound. We therefore landed our carriage, though with no small difficulty, Yalta being an open roadstead. All the energy and kindness of Prince Woronzow's English bailiff were required to save the vehicle from being deposited at the bottom of the Black Sea. This being accomplished, it was late when we said adieu to our hosts, the ladies embracing me, and pitying me for going, as they said, to a worse place than Siberia; in which latter country, they assured me, there were balls and diversions of various kinds among the exiles; whereas in Persia there was nothing of the kind. We then, on the 8th of October, proceeded on our journey, leaving the feldt jäger and servants on board to recreate themselves the remainder of the voyage to Kertch. The absence of the former did not cause us the least inconvenience. Our road lay along the coast to Alushta, through beautiful scenery and a hilly country. At this small town we turned to the north, the road leading over the tedious pass of Chadir-dagh, or Tent Mountain, so called from a fancied resemblance to a tent. It was long after nightfall when we commenced the ascent, our progress having been retarded in playing the good Samaritan to two Russian ladies travelling post alone to Yalta, whose tears and entreaties were fruitless in persuading the obdurate yemshiks, as the Russian postilions are called, to supply them with horses. They appealed to us piteously for succour, and we sent them on their way rejoicing, after we had

softened the hearts of the yemshiks in the manner most efficacious in Russia, as well as in other countries.

Chadir-dagh proved to be an exceedingly high hill—mountain, indeed, I might call it—but with a tolerably good and perfectly safe road. Though I forget its height, I remember it to be the Chimborazo and Dewalagiri of the Crimea. At the summit, which we reached at midnight, we resolved to remain in the carriage at the solitary post-house, having before our eyes the fear of a famous robber, who for a long time had set the Czar at defiance. Our only weapon was a single old Russian flint-pistol, kindly offered for our protection by a Russian gentleman whom we accidentally met at the inn at Yalta; but this pistol looked more dangerous to fire than to face; more awful subjectively than objectively; and, as Mr. Grattan said of the Irish militia, it seemed formidable only to its friends. This marauder was a Tartar, who had been a soldier and deserted. Prince Woronzow told us that he once singly encountered and despoiled sixteen Jews. He forced them to lie on the earth, "boca a tierra," after the Spanish fashion, and then robbed them at his leisure, recreating himself at intervals with oaths, kicks, and cuffs.

The Jews of the Crimea are called Karaites, though why I do not remember.* They reject, it is said, the Talmud and all tradition, clinging to the Bible alone. They are infinitely superior to their tribe in Poland, Russia, and Persia, in personal appearance; and they have the reputation of equally exceeding them in morals and

* I have since heard that, like Koran, the word is derived from an Arabic term meaning "to read."

character. The squalor, dirt, rags, and abject sycophancy of the Jews of those countries are not found among the Karaites.

In the morning we descended the mountain, and arrived in good time at Simpheropol, and were conducted to a small country seat—small, contrasted with Aloupka—belonging to Prince Woronzow, whose hospitality and kindness never slept from the time we entered his dominions, as I may call them, at Odessa, until we left them at the Aras, on the frontier of Persia. We found everything prepared for us,—servants, beds, and a most luxurious breakfast. We would willingly have passed a day at this pleasant retreat, which, among other attractions, contained a large library; but the fear of the Caucasus and Kasee Beg * urged us on. We drove through a pleasant, slightly undulating country, sometimes a savannah, but at intervals well cultivated and inhabited. In many places we beheld what to my husband was a novelty, as well as to me,—camels drawing waggons heavily laden, and ploughing the fields. In Arabia, India, Persia, and Turkey, they are used only as beasts of burden; and in Mekran, and among the Belooches, for riding, on their distant marauding expeditions. Late at night we arrived at Kaffa, or Theodosia, as the Russians prefer to call it, where we found excellent horses ready for us, and therefore remained only a few minutes; but long enough, dark as it was, to perceive it was reduced to humble pretensions. The remains of the palaces constructed by the Genoese when they were lords of Kaffa, suffered destruc-

* A high mountain in the Caucasus.

tion at the hands of the Tartars and Turks, for the construction of their mosques and dwellings; and these in their turn are reported to have undergone similar devastation from the Muscovite conquerors; so that between the invaders little is left to Theodosia of its ancient magnificence. What a contrast, and what a theme for reflection, does its present state afford, compared to the days when 300,000 Russians were collected in its bazars, and sold as slaves to the merchants of Constantinople!

Continuing our journey over an exceedingly bad road, we next day reached Kertch, where we found an excellent house awaiting us. This is a cheerful town, and must be thriving; as, besides being the quarantine station, vessels whose burden unfits them for the shallow navigation of the Sea of Azow, await here the arrival of their cargoes from Taganrog and the Don. Though exceedingly hot in summer, the cold in winter is of equal intensity, notwithstanding that the position of Kertch is eight degrees lower than that of London. Sledges proceed down the Don to Taganrog, and even over part of the Sea of Azow. Kertch, it may be surmised, does not possess many objects of art or curiosity. Whatever may have been the antiquity of the Cimmerian Bosphorians, little remains to mark their power at this regal seat of Mithridates beyond the numerous sepulchral mounds with which the neighbourhood is crowded. Time and violence have done their work; although it is supposed that research among its ruins would bring to light more antiquities than are to be found in any part of the Crimea. A small museum, containing medals, coins, inscriptions, fragments of marbles, and articles of pottery, collected in the neighbourhood, reputed to be

remnants of the Grecian rule once existing here, and strongly resembling similar specimens from Etruria, is preserved with great reverence. The governor's wife most kindly lent us her carriage to view a large mound, a short distance from Kertch, which our cicerone vouched to be the tomb of Mithridates, but which I believe was a stretch of his imagination, the so-called sepulchre of that monarch being, I am told, much farther off. The former must be the place which a French writer (Dubois Montreux), a recent author, I believe, with a Gallican contempt for all names not French, calls Kouloba, and which Clarke names Altynobo, intended probably for Altoon-oba, meaning, golden tent, or house, in Turkish. The doctor's Turkish, however, is not very orthodox, I hear. In the Crimea he meets with a piece of water which he calls "Beys eau," Bey's water, and expresses his astonishment that the words should be pronounced exactly as in French, and have precisely the same meaning. The mistake is curious, and ought to put travellers on their guard in dealing with new languages. The words are Bey soo; the latter meaning water in Turkish.

It contained nothing to excite attention, unless the association of ideas carrying back the mind to remote antiquity. An excavation at the foot of the mound revealed a small vaulted chamber, empty, as may be guessed. The surrounding country seemed covered with mounds of the same kind. The Russian coachman drove us over the country in a heavy vehicle, having a large hammercloth, with a recklessness only equalled in Persia. The charioteers of both countries seem to consider a carriage as a piece of artillery. Mountains, rivers, and ravines are no

impediment to them, as I have found by experience. Like Sir Richard Blackmore, we might say,—

> "Nor Alps, nor Apennines could keep him out,
> Nor fortified redoubt."

On the succeeding day a small steamer was provided to convey us across the Cimmerian Bosphorus, the Straits of Taman, a voyage which occupied two hours. The weather was charming; nevertheless we saw a Russian war-steamer in a plight similar to what befell ours near Sebastopol. She was lying on her side on a sand-bank. (A.)

CHAPTER IV.

Passage to Taman — Russian hospitals — Line of the Kuban — Russian sentinels perched on platforms — Cossacks of the line — Ekaterinodar — Stavropol — Our Armenian hostess — Novel mode of ablution — Giorgesk — Caucasian watering-place — Vladikafkaz, the keep of the Caucasus — Curious mode of conversion to Christianity among the Ossets — Shamil — Across the Caucasus to Tiflis.

TAMAN is a miserable place, desolate, dreary, and sad. It consists of a few houses, or rather cottages, on the shore. The commandant's house alone possessed the dignity of a patch of garden; the rest was steppe or swamp. We wished to proceed without delay, but the commandant's hospitality would not admit of our departure without partaking of his bread and salt; and, to say the truth, hunger, with a vision of being dinnerless until we reached Tiflis, looming in the future, made us more ready to comply. The interval before dinner was passed by my husband in inspecting the military hospitals with our host. Taman seems to be used chiefly as an establishment for invalid soldiers. Two or three hundred of them from the small posts along the Circassian coast of the Black Sea, were now lying here. My husband said the hospitals were in excellent order. The sick seemed carefully attended to; the beds were comfortable; the men were dressed in good hospital clothing, which, as well as their own persons, was perfectly clean. Russian was the only language known to the Tamanians; nevertheless we could understand, that

the Circassian coast was considered pestiferous, during summer. Indeed, it is notorious that the Russians perish in that climate, as well as in the swamps and jungles of Imeretia and Mingrelia, in numbers which would seem incredible.

The fact of making such a place as Taman a general hospital for the garrison of the coast was alone proof sufficient of the dreadful climate prevailing at the military stations on the shores of the Black Sea. Taman, too, conceals its hidden treasures of antiquities, its tumuli, its fragments of marbles, temples, and so forth; the remnants of a former age of Hellenic greatness and enterprise. Now it is desolate enough; and one can scarcely bring oneself to credit that here was once a great city.

In the evening we renewed our journey. We now had approached dangerous ground; it was only in the island of Taman we could venture to travel by night. Notwithstanding the assurances of Prince Woronzow of perfect safety, I could not approach the haunts of the Circassians without anxiety. Their feats of daring in their predatory incursions were well known; and it was besides obvious to the eye in how much awe they were held by the Russians. Our road was along the line of the Kuban, the river separating Russia from Circassia; for though the Emperor includes the latter country among "all the Russias," the frontier is as distinctly traced as that of Persia or China. We never ventured to move without a considerable escort of those showy horsemen the line Cossacks. It is marvellous how little change has taken place in this country during fifty years. Our journey under the Caucasus was only a repetition

of that described by Clarke in his interesting travels; the same morasses and jungles, the same clouds of mosquitos, or rather midges, which could not be excluded from a closed carriage; the same desolation, the same posts of Cossacks at short intervals. It was curious to see the sentinel perched at the summit of a triangle, thirty or forty feet high, with a small platform at the top, gazing intently at the Kuban, and over the extensive plains of grass, swamp, and jungle beyond that river, towards Circassia; surmounted by a beacon to be fired the moment an enemy was distinguishable. So absorbed were the watchers, that when we passed under their strange roosting-place they hardly deigned to look at us, although for them we must have been a novel spectacle. This vigilance impressed me with a very uncomfortable sense of danger; or was it a mere display of rigid discipline these Cossacks were enacting? In reading Clarke's narrative of the scene fifty years ago, I fancy him to have been our companion on our journey in 1849.

Let the traveller on the Kuban bid adieu to the comforts, and sometimes to the necessaries, of life. I scarcely quitted the carriage until we reached Stavropol, the capital of the Russian districts north of the Caucasus. A few Cossack villages might be seen here and there, with some appearance of cultivation; but at the military posts and post-houses the accommodation and fare were of the humblest, or, more truly, the meanest, description. On one occasion, arriving late at a station after a long and hard day's work, we found absolutely nothing to eat, not even bread, or the hitherto unfailing samawar, or kettle-urn, for preparing tea, which is found throughout

Russia; so we went dinnerless and supperless to bed, not having anticipated or provided for this dearth and famine.

Our guards, as I before said, were composed of Cossacks of the line, meaning those guarding and stationed on the line of the Kuban. They are, I have heard it conjectured, formed from miscellaneous races: Turkish tribes settled in these tracts, refugees from Circassia in a large proportion, and colonists from the Tchernomorski, or Black Sea Cossacks, who inhabit the country northwards towards the Don, where begins the territory of the Don Cossacks. They hold a high reputation in Russia for the military qualities created by a life of unceasing peril, and for their constant and successful struggles with their mountain foes. My husband was in admiration of their appearance, thoroughly rough and ready, "rugged and dangerous." They are altogether irregular troops, each man fighting on his own account. They seem to dress as they best can, though they affect as much as possible the appearance of Circassians in attire, arms, and mode of fighting, so much so as not to be easily distinguishable at a short distance from the mountaineers. A "pulk" of line Cossacks, with their weather-beaten visages, their thick beards, their Circassian caps of black sheepskin, resembling a broad low turban, with a loose crown of yellow or red cloth; their motley coarse frock-coats with six receptacles for ball-cartridges on each breast, like the Circassians; their yaponchas, a short cloak of goatskin with long hair, moveable round the neck to face the wind and rain from any quarter, present a striking spectacle. These line

Cossacks are described to be the only Cossacks who will fight the Circassians on equal terms, or of whom the Circassians have the least apprehension. I was told it was a point of honour among the Circassians and these rough soldiers that, if two parties or two single horsemen met, and were in doubt if they were friends or foes, a horseman from one side would dash out and gallop in a circle to the right, if a Circassian; on which a horseman from the other party would immediately imitate this evolution, but galloping to the left, if a Cossack, to show he was a foe. An eternal war is waged between the line Cossacks and the Circassians who inhabit the swampy grassy plains between the Kuban and the mountains, so favourable for ambush and surprise. Dr. Clarke seems to think that the Tchernomorski Cossacks are derived chiefly from Circassian descent, which would account for their martial qualities and superiority over the Don Cossacks; yet how is this descent to be reconciled with the same author's statement of the Tchernomorski being colonists from the Dnieper little more than half a century ago? He is enthusiastic in favour of all Cossacks, Don and Tchernomorski; still I must avow that the specimens of the Don to be seen in Tehran, attached to the Russian mission, are far from exciting an impression in their favour. Instead of the bold troopers of the Kuban, they have been metamorphosed into nondescript soldiers, in a frightful uniform.

We plodded our way through swamp and steppe, with the Kuban on our right hand, without adventure or variety, until we began to approach Ekaterinodar; and then at length the long-wished-for peaks of the Caucasus

began to show their solitary grandeur, every hour increasing in magnificence. The right bank of the river being considerably more elevated than the land on the opposite side, we had, during our progress, a clear view of the level country to the base of the mountains, with an occasional sight of the rapid Kuban, and now and then a Circassian village afar off. Ekaterinodar is the principal settlement of the Tchernomorski Cossacks, and is little more than a large military station, constructed after the fashion of that martial race. It is a collection of cottages, with a few better houses interspersed, belonging to the commandant, his staff, and the officers of the Cossacks.

The kindness of Prince Woronzow still pursued, or rather met us. At Ekaterinodar we were received by Count M——, aide-de-camp of the general-in-chief of Cossacks, who had been despatched from Stavropol to meet us. We are under great obligations to this young officer, who accompanied us the rest of our journey to the Persian frontier. Ever active, and on the watch to oblige us and facilitate our journey, under his charge we made rapid progress. His equipage consisted of the springless, roofless pavoska; but in Russia officers, soldiers, and horses, lead a rough life. The pavoska is the vehicle of all ranks of the army. Prince Simon Woronzow, the son of the Emperor's Lieutenant, and a major-general, used often to mount the pavoska and travel day and night.

Our road to Stavropol was generally level. This remark is applicable to the entire tract in this part of Russia, it being only at the very foot of the Caucasus

that any considerable difference of elevation is perceptible. On the left hand was the interminable flat steppe, extending far to the east, north, and west; and on the right were the grassy plains of Kabarda, or Circassia cis-Caucasus, the country of the race named in their own language Adigh, the word Cherkess, the original of Circassia, being, it seems, either Turkish or Persian. The inhabitants of these plains are, from their accessibility, more or less subject to Russia; but this vassalage does not, as we have seen, dispense with the most watchful circumspection, nor prevent the wild denizens from carrying their forays across the Kuban. At this part of the journey we lost the opportunity, never to be retrieved, of seeing a Circassian family. Knowing my curiosity on the subject, Count M—— had ordered a family of hostages from a friendly tribe, to be prepared at daylight to receive company; the men arrayed for battle, the women and children in their gayest national costume. At daybreak we proceeded, as we thought, to their house, some distance off, but after an hour we found we were far on the high road to Stavropol, our French servant having judged fit to think and to say we were wholly indifferent to everything sublunary excepting breakfast.

Stavropol is the chief town of the Russian Caucasian districts, north of the mountains. Like all Russian towns in this part of the world, the streets are wide, the houses low and painted white. There was a theatre and an assembly-room, where, I was told, they had balls during winter.

We arrived at near midnight, and were lodged in the house of an Armenian merchant. At the door, to our

consternation, there appeared something very like an illumination to celebrate our arrival, while several civil authorities, in full dress, presented themselves to offer their congratulations. Next followed an officer in uniform, who, with great solemnity of demeanour and the attitude of the parade, drew forth a paper, from which he read aloud in Russian. This proved to be a report or "present state" of the garrison of Stavropol, which this gentleman lost no time in notifying. After apprising us of the number of the sick, absent, and the forthcoming, they all gravely retired, and left us to a needful and excellent supper, and to repose. This complimentary form of the military report seems to be an ordinary usage. We experienced a repetition of the same ceremony several times afterwards. We were, as I said before, billeted in the house of a wealthy merchant, whose wife next morning came to pay me a visit, with seven fine children, of whom she seemed very proud. She was gorgeously attired in a light-coloured satin dress, with a profusion of diamonds, pearls, and jewellery. Russian and Armenian being the only languages in which she could communicate, our conversation was limited, but she made up in civility and smiling good-humour for our inability to converse. A short time after the visit was over, I found her, in her ordinary plain dress, washing her hands and face in a saucepan. This saucepan, and a small silver jug in my room, of the size of a cream-ewer, appeared to be the only vessels in the house appropriated to ablution. But, primitive as was the former culinary utensil, my husband met an instance where it was exceeded in simplicity. Many years previously he had been travelling in the Caucasus.

Having stopped one night at a post-house, in the morning, on awaking, he found a Russian officer dressing—if dressing it could be called, he having slept in his clothes, boots and all. Among other feats of legerdemain, or de bouche, he filled his mouth with water, where, as it was cold, he retained it some time, and, after being sufficiently heated, he ejected it gradually on his hands, scouring his face at the same time. With all these peculiarities, it may be doubted if the Russians in general are not at least as attentive to their persons as the English. The hot bath is the constant resource of the poorest peasant.

We dined next day with the Governor, at whose house we met an agreeable party. Seated near me was a pretty little girl of apparently twelve or fourteen, who, to my astonishment, turned out to be the wife of our friend Count M——, and the mother of his son and heir. No one at table seemed to think her youth extraordinary, early marriages being, it appeared, as frequent in Russia as in America.

We had left the Kuban before reaching Stavropol, from which time the security of the roads seemed to increase. Our escort, after leaving Stavropol, not only dwindled to two or three horsemen, but we even ventured occasionally to travel without protection. The truth was, we had left the Circassians behind, and had approached the lands of the Tchetchens,—a tribe not less warlike, but whose country was free from the swamps and fastnesses of Kabarda, and consequently more under the control of the Russians. A few years ago, no traveller was allowed to proceed without an escort, so dangerous

was the passage, while the post was accompanied by two pieces of artillery and a company of infantry. Even to this day it is not safe to dispense with all precaution.

The next town we arrived at was Giorgesk, a place of no importance, unless it be as a military post connecting Stavropol with Vladikafkaz, the *key of the Caucasus.* To the right lay the famous watering-place called Besh-Dagh in Turkish, and Piategorsk in Russian, meaning in both languages Five Mountains. This is the Baden-Baden of Russia, where the Muscovite loungers or invalids come from distant quarters, so far even as Moscow, to recruit their purses at the gaming-table, or their health at the numerous springs, which are said to possess medicinal virtues of every variety in no ordinary perfection. Piategorsk, several years ago, suffered the infliction of a foray, and was surprised by the mountaineers; nearly every one, it is said, having been destroyed, including a colony of German missionaries, with their families.

At length, still following the steppe, we reached Vladikafkaz. The solemn snow-clad range of the Caucasus had long before displayed itself to our sight in all its glory and grandeur. Towering far above all was the monarch mountain of the range, Elboorz, situated in the heart of the independent tribes, and said to be at least 16,000 feet high;* its summit has, it is supposed, never yet been reached. It is strange that in Persia the same name of Elboorz should be preserved for the range of

* 18,493 feet. See Mrs. Somerville's Physical Geography. On the authority of Fuss.

mountains a few miles to the north of Tehran, which is continued to Khorassan, and even farther, until at length it reaches the Hindoo Koosh, and, finally, the Himalaya. Vladikafkaz is an important post, close to the Caucasus, of which it commands the entrance by the famous pass of Dariel. From Stavropol to this fortress the same system of fortified posts was maintained that we had seen on the other side of that city, though in fewer numbers, but at Vladikafkaz, even to my unpractised eye, it was evident that much greater care and expense had been bestowed in strengthening the key of the central Caucasus, and of the Russian communications with Tiflis and the Georgian provinces. It deserves all their solicitude, as, with the exception of the road by Derbend, on the Caspian Sea, Redout Kala and the Black Sea being no longer Russian, this is the only line for the transmission of troops, munitions of war, or merchandize, to the trans-Caucasian districts. There are, it is reported, other paths intersecting the mountains, but being through the midst of hostile tribes, and moreover only available for foot travellers, or at most horsemen, the importance of the main route has never been overlooked. The entire road to Tiflis is defended by strong posts and barracks, which contribute largely to preserve the fidelity of the Ossets, through whose territory the road is carried. This tribe has been so thoroughly subdued that no escort is required between Vladikafkaz and Tiflis, excepting, strangely enough, for the first four miles on leaving the former city, where the mountains really commence. The remainder of the road is considered sufficiently guarded by the presence of the various military posts disposed along its entire

length. The Ossets have been subject to Russia since the time Georgia was annexed to that empire, more than fifty years ago. A portion of the tribe is said to have adopted a sort of nominal Christianity; so many indeed have been proselytised, that to use the quaint expression of a Russian writer (Wagner), the converts far exceed the entire population—something like my countryman, who, when his pocket was picked, declared that five out of four of his companions were thieves. It appears that, conversion being attended with certain advantages, the same proselytes had been repeatedly registered under different appellations.

October 19th.—We had been anxious to leave Vladikafkaz at once without stopping, but the flesh-pots of Egypt were too alluring to the appetite of Count M——, who perfectly well knew the difference between a supper at a post-station in the mountains of Caucasus, and an elaborate repast at Prince Woronzow's house at Vladikafkaz, where he assured us everything was prepared for our reception. A few sly hints thrown in by the Count of the approach of evening and of the risk from prowlers of Shamil's partizans, put an end to speculation, and we adjourned to Prince Woronzow's house, where, as usual, we had every reason to be grateful for his kindness.

Strolling about the heights near the town later in the evening, we were shown, far to the north-east, the hills where Shâmil was said to be living in defiance of the Emperor of all the Russias. This information gave us some surprise. Shamil in Persia is regarded as chief of the Lezgees, a tribe, the fiercest among these mountaineers, who inhabit the tracts towards the Caspian, at the eastern

extremity of the Caucasus. Shamil is, however, an erratic monarch, one day leading a foray against the Russians, or defending himself from one of their inroads, another carrying fire and sword among the tribes which have traitorously dared to form a truce with the Muscovites. We saw during our walk a few miserably dressed girls near some tents belonging to the Ossets.

Next morning we resumed our journey. A small escort conducted us to the entrance of the Pass of Dariel, and there left us, all danger having then ceased. As my pen cannot do justice to the grandeur of the scenes our road led us through, I shall not attempt to describe them, but refer the curious reader to Sir R. Ker Porter's work, in which the mountain scenery of the Pass of Dariel is most vividly portrayed. After passing the village of Dariel, from which is derived the name of the defile, we spent the night in a lonely post-house, where for the first time I heard the howling of jackals. It is a melancholy wild cry, and, as in Ireland we are accustomed to regard the howling of a dog as a thing of ill omen, these yells sounded particularly dismal to me. Next day we passed in succession Kazee Bey, the formidable Kazee Bey, Kobi, Kassanoor, Ananoor, Doushete. We found the road excellent and free from danger, as free at least as a mountain road can be made. Sir R. Ker Porter has indulged in a little exaggeration in his description of the horrors and perils he experienced in the passage of the defile, though for my part I cannot remember any cause for excitement or apprehension, unless to a very fervid imagination. Even Kazee Bey, said to be 14,000 feet high, was divested of any terror. The carriage was

so heavy that we left it and ascended to the summit in the pavoska; the descent was so steep that we thought it more prudent to walk down. I can imagine that under another aspect, a wall of snow impending above and a scanty breadth of road, my lord judge (Kazee is our old acquaintance Cadi) would be very formidable, and would give a severe trial to the nerves. At the foot of this mountain we crossed, by a long narrow bridge, a rapid turbulent river, which we were told was the Terek, the second stream in importance in the Caucasus. The southern extremity of the bridge was defended by a small military work, which seemed more insignificant than so important a position deserved.

At Ananoor we had the good fortune to make the acquaintance of a Mingrelian lady, who was married to a person of distinction among the Ossets. She was sitting at the end of a room, destitute, with the exception of Persian carpets, of all furniture. She was dressed in the Georgian costume, which is very becoming to a young face, but makes old people look perfectly frightful. It consists of a cap made of coloured silk, embroidered either with gold or pearls, made like a boy's cap, and placed on the top of the head; the hair hangs down in tresses, and over it is thrown a light tulle veil; the gown opens in front, showing a thin handkerchief; and over the dress is a short pelisse, made, if possible, of the richest materials. This lady must have been handsome when young. She complained of the solitude of her life, as she had no children; and, in going away, begged we would leave her our visiting-cards as a souvenir.

Before quitting the Caucasus I may as well transcribe

a few particulars concerning the Circassians, which though I fear may not be in themselves novel, yet certainly come from a novel source, namely, a Turkish slave-dealer, who had given up his profession, and was my husband's instructor in Turkish several years ago at Trebizonde. His name was Hafiz Effendi, and his residence in Circassia amounted to five years. His reason for giving up this branch of commerce was the vigilance of the Russian cruisers, which made it too hazardous to attempt to cross the sea with his living cargo. The ports he frequented were Soojook Teghameesa and Shiyapsookha, and he frequently penetrated fifteen or twenty hours' distance into the interior.

There are no towns; the villages are built along the coast, but are not very numerous; the houses are dispersed through the forest, which is not thick and reaches close to the sea.

The population is divided into the following classes—khans, or princes; meerzas, nobles; usdens, gentlemen; ryots, or freemen; and kieulehs, serfs; besides slaves obtained in war or by purchase.

These classes do not intermarry; and, like the castes of India, no man, whatever be his capacity or his deeds, can rise from one class to a higher rank. It is even very rare for one class to buy slaves from another, unless to sell them again.

Circassia, or Adeegha, as the natives style their country, is divided into six large tribes or confederacies, of which the names are Natchwo, Natakhwo, Koblee, Sabich, Gwoghwo, Sotokh; but Kabarda, although the inhabitants resemble the Circassians in language, customs, and man-

ners, does not belong to any of these tribes. These six large tribes are subdivided into fraternities, the members of which hold to each other the relations of brother and sister, and therefore cannot intermarry.

Serfs are numerous, a rich man having often fifty or sixty male serfs. Their condition seems to be much more analogous with serfdom than slavery. In external appearance there is no difference perceptible between them and other Circassians. In colour they are the same, as well as in courage and other qualities. Slaves may sit and eat in a mejlis, or society, of the higher classes, and they carry arms.

About half the population consists of Soonce Mahommedans. In general they know very little of their religion, and many care very little about the matter. They are equally indifferent to the religion of their neighbours, and usually are willing to give their daughters in marriage to idolators, who are numerous. These latter appear to believe in God, but they worship trees; at all events, they go through ceremonies under trees.

There are some Christians of Greek or Armenian descent, but they are almost wholly Circassianised: their language, dress, customs, are Circassian. They can obtain wives from the idolators; but the Mahommedans would rather give their daughters to the latter, as being real Adeeghas, than to these Christians, who are found chiefly in the interior.

Eloping with a young woman, with her own consent, is a common occurrence. Her father can make no complaint, as, if the girl's parents are not slaves, she has the disposal of herself; but he can exact from the lover the

amount of her value, and the "white beards" settle what that value shall be.

The Circassians are of middling stature, and tolerably stout. Their hair is of all colours, but reddish is the most prevalent. Blue eyes are more common than any other colour. They are not in general very fair, though some among them are eminently so; and a good complexion is not at all uncommon.

They rarely sit cross-legged, or on their heels, preferring to sit like Europeans, on cushions. They eat, as the Turks do, seated at a tray placed on a stool.

They never move out without their arms, it being effeminate to appear unprovided with the means of defence. Their tempers are excellent; they are not easily roused to anger, and they are quickly pacified. Conversation is one of their chief amusements, and they indulge in it freely.

The mode in which the trade with Turkey is carried on is this. Trebizonde is the principal port from which the merchants proceed, though they also embark from Samsoon and Sinope, Constantinople, and occasionally from Egypt. The trade is generally conducted in partnership. One person supplies the capital, and the profits are equally divided between him and the person who undertakes the labour of the voyage to Circassia. The capital, on an average, is about 250*l.* or 300*l.* The articles taken to Circassia mostly consist of silk and cotton cloths, calicoes, chintzes, cheap shawls, a small quantity of gunpowder, and a great deal of salt; also some Turkish coloured leather for slippers and bridles.

When the boat arrives at a landing-place, it is drawn

high up on the shore to conceal it from the Russians. The merchants then disembark, and if, from having made previous voyages, they are already provided with a konāk pāe, they go at once to their abode; but if not, they inquire for the best private house, to which they proceed immediately, and are always welcome. The konāk pāe is the host. If one were to leave his house for another, it would be a mortal offence. It is his solemn duty to protect the person and property of his guests, and he is always ready to lose his life in their defence. As this is well known, a traveller once *hosted* is tolerably safe. After the merchants have landed, the people assemble from the vicinity to hear the news, and to see the novelties from the land of the Ameer ool Moomeneen, the Commander of the Faithful, whom they continue to revere. The goods are taken to the konāk pāe's house, and there the people come with their articles of barter, consisting of honey, butter, tallow, hides, fox-skins, slave-girls and boys—the two latter articles of trade being, however, kept in another dwelling—while the boatmen purchase grain in exchange for salt, and take it to Turkey. People come from fifty hours' distance to traffic. They are keen in dealing, and never make a bargain without abundance of talking. The profits, after all expenses are paid, amount generally to twenty-five per cent.

Those persons who have slaves for the market do not bring them to the merchant's residence. When the latter has seen the slaves, they retire to another house, leaving the transaction to be completed by no less a person than an elchee, or ambassador, or by a dellāl, or broker.

When a Circassian says he has got slaves to sell, the Turk inquires if they are young, and in case of an affirmative answer, proceeds to ask how many spans they are. This refers to height. A girl is considered beyond spanning when she reaches six spans; she is then technically said to be "qarishden chiqdee," that is, she has passed spanning, and is understood to be twelve years old.

Slaves are valued by the number of pieces of silk, chintz, &c., given in exchange for them.

Ugly female slaves are purchased for Constantinople, to fill menial or domestic duties. Old women are sometimes sold in Circassia. They are purchased to act as nurses in Constantinople. An old woman may be worth two or three thousand ghooroosh (17*l.* to 25*l.*) in that city.

If among the slaves that have been bought there are any full-grown men, they are chained or tied lest they should run away, but women are never tied. The merchants, after the purchase, supply them with new clothes, the goodness and quality of which depend on the value of the slave. The food given to them is the same as that of the merchants themselves, and there is no limit to the quantity.

A great many among the female slaves are glad to leave the country; and some young women, not slaves, who are poor and unprotected, especially orphans, often entreat their relations to sell them. Their hope is that they may be purchased in Constantinople by some wealthy Turk, at the head of whose establishment they may be placed. An orphan-girl, at all events, is certain of not changing for the worse.

Sometimes a free man is sold by force. He is stolen

from some distant place, taken down to the coast, and sold. This does not often happen, and is still more rare with regard to women.

Occasionally there is a collusive sale. A man procures a friend to sell him; he then takes to flight, and the amount of the purchase is divided between them.

Hafiz Effendi says he does not well know how the supply of slaves is maintained. The country is populous, criminals are sold, slaves are brought from distant places; as before observed, orphans are frequently offered for sale, and some persons are themselves desirous of change, and willing to be sold. These, he supposes, are the principal sources from which the supply is kept up. A man cannot sell his son or daughter against their own consent; but it is by no means uncommon for a man to bring his daughter into the market by her own desire. The unmarried girls do nothing whatever excepting needlework, but the married women do all the drudgery.

The Circassian girls are not, the Effendi considers, strikingly handsome. They are, however, exceedingly clever and intelligent, readily learning Turkish, music, and dancing. Their intellectual superiority makes them attractive, and they soon acquire influence in a Turkish family. The Georgian women are handsome, but much inferior in mental qualities, and their market value is in consequence less.

Prices of course vary at Constantinople according to the vigilance of Russian cruisers, and the incorruptibility of Russian agents at Trebizonde, Samsoon, and Sinope. The following is the average price in Circassia: —

A man of	30 years of age,	£10	
,,	20	,,	10 to £30
,,	15	,,	30 ,, 70
,,	10	,,	20 ,, 50
,,	5	,,	10 ,, 30.
A woman of	50 years of age,	£10	to £30
,,	40	,,	30 ,, 40
,,	30	,,	40 ,, 70
,,	20 to 25	,,	50 ,, 100
,,	14 ,, 18	,,	50 ,, 150
,,	8 ,, 12	,,	30 ,, 80
,,	5	,,	20 ,, 40.

The foregoing statement is a very condensed account of the Effendi's narrative, which would have been still more extended had not his affairs called him suddenly to Constantinople.

In passing through the Caucasus, Count M—— procured us a gratification fully as interesting and agreeable as the dame from Mingrelia. The vocal powers of the Russian soldiery have a wide reputation, combining not only sweetness of tone but superior execution. A party of thirty or forty soldiers, whom he had assembled on the roadside, near one of the military stations we had just past, improvised a concert, which proved highly agreeable. It had really a surprising effect to hear these rough uncultivated men singing with the utmost precision tenor, second tenor, bass, and all preserving a perfect correctness and harmony. It is said that on a march an entire regiment of Russian soldiers will sometimes relieve their fatigue by singing in parts one of their national melodies.

CHAPTER V.

Tiflis sacked by the Persians — Prince Woronzow's improvements — Georgian drinking parties — Armenian Patriarch — Gookcha Lake — Supper at Erivan — Etchmiatzin — Nakshewan — Our host and hostess — Night at the Aras — Crossing the frontier — Farewell to Russia.

TIFLIS is another Vladikafkaz (key) on the southern side of the Caucasus. We were glad to arrive at this capital of the Transcaucasian provinces, which is close to the foot of the mountains, and situated on both sides of the river Kur. Some sixty years ago it was sacked by the Shah of Persia, Agha Mahommed Khan, the founder of the dynasty of Kājār, who carried a large portion of the inhabitants, Georgians and Armenians, into slavery. I saw at Tehran a few of these unhappy captives, who all had been forced to embrace Mahommedanism, and many of whom had risen to the highest stations; just as the Circassian slaves in Constantinople became pashas, seraskiers, capitan-pashas, &c. Tiflis has entirely recovered from this shock. It is now a most thriving, active, and bustling city, and will doubtless, when the day arrives for the development of free trade in the dominions of the Czar, become a rich emporium of commerce, situated as it is midway between the Black Sea and Caspian, and on the high road between Russia, Persia, and Asia Minor. The official part of the town is full of imposing buildings, and the native portion is equally well stored with busy shops,

crowded by the motley population. Prince Woronzow's fostering care has not allowed this important part of the territory under his jurisdiction to remain without its share of his patronage. In spite of the pre-occupation of a war not always successful, with the mountaineers, he is said to have planned many valuable institutions, to which are to be added a large and handsomely built theatre for the performance of operas, not completed at the time of our visit, besides a small theatre, for Russian comedies and farces. All these improvements evince his anxiety to promote civilization among the Georgians and Armenians. The Military Governor of Tiflis was an Armenian of Georgia, General Baïbetoff; a man of experience, who had distinguished himself in the campaigns of Turkey and Persia in former years. It sounded strange to find an Armenian occupying this high post, but Russia is more cosmopolite than England. A stranger of the gate is readily admitted within the temple; but it will require a change in English ideas before we find a Canadian or Maltese Governor of India, or the Cape of Good Hope. Is this facility the result of enlightenment, or does it proceed from the dearth of native talent?

If I were to form my opinion from the Georgian ladies visible in the street, which, except one evening that we went to the theatre, was the only place I had an opportunity of beholding them, I should be forced to declare that their beauty has obtained a greater reputation than it deserves. They certainly are fair, with high complexions, natural or artificial, and regular features, all of which perhaps entitle the owners to the meed of beauty;

still the entire absence of animation or expression deprives the countenance of attraction. They look well, however, in their pretty dresses while young. The Armenians, when out of doors, wrap themselves up in white veils, or rather cloaks, which have a graceful effect.

At Tiflis we were lodged, as usual, at the house of an Armenian merchant. He was a man of much reputed wealth. His house was furnished with great richness, and at a cost that may be imagined when it is considered that the whole of the furniture was brought from St. Petersburg. It was much too expensive to be profaned by use, being exclusively reserved either for compulsory guests, like ourselves, or marriage and other feasts. The part of the habitation occupied by our host and his family was very humble, and far from clean.

Next to its conquerors, the Georgians are the master caste of this country. It is said that between the Georgians and the Armenians, who are found here in great numbers, there is a wonderful contrast in character and manners. The Georgian is bold, turbulent, reckless, extravagant; the Armenian is mean, cringing, timid, always intent on gain, and, unlike a Georgian, in keeping what he gains. The same characteristics mark him in Persia and Turkey, and I am told everywhere else; for, like the gipsy, he is a wanderer on the face of the earth, and is to be found in every part of Asia. He is consequently an abundant and pleasant harvest to all needy pashas, khans, hakims, and minor functionaries of misrule, easily reaped, gathered, and gleaned.

It is as unsurpassable topers, as well as for their military qualities, which have always been acknowledged, that the

Georgians have acquired notoriety. At their frequent drinking parties it is said they will pass several days and nights, almost without intermission, in quaffing the productions of the vineyards of Kakheti, a district in the mountains east of Tiflis. This wine is by no means of bad quality; it is of a deep red colour, so deep that one fancies it has been tinged with some dye to produce so intense a hue. They are said to consume incredible quantities of wine on these occasions, and in a fashion that would put to shame the drinking triumphs of Ireland, recorded by Sir Jonah Barrington, in days of old, when intoxication was the standard of spirit. The drinking-vessel is a cow's horn, of considerable length, and the point of honour is to drain it at a draught. The brethren and convivial rivals of the Georgians in the neighbouring provinces of Imeretia and Mingrelia, instead of a horn, use a delicately-hollowed globe of walnut tree, with a long narrow tube at the orifice. It holds fully a pint, and like its companion, the horn, the contents are consumed at a single gulp. How these globes are hollowed is as great a marvel as the construction of the ingenious Chinese puzzle of ball within ball.

During our short stay at Tiflis we paid a visit to Narses, the venerable patriarch of the Armenian Church. His manners and appearance were full of dignity and benevolence—an observation seldom applicable to the clergy of the Armenian Church in Persia. Notwithstanding his extreme age, he conversed with great cheerfulness and even vivacity, showing much interest in and some knowledge of the affairs of Europe. Not suspecting we were Catholics, he amused himself and us too, he no doubt thought, by

sneering at the Pope, descanting with great unction on the supposed infallibility of His Holiness. Having no inclination to enter on polemics, and unwilling to put the Patriarch out of countenance by explaining the real state of the case, we allowed him to pursue the pleasant theme without restraint to the top of his bent. There was an appearance of great simplicity throughout the establishment of the Patriarch, indicating, if not poverty, the entire absence of any approach to superabundant revenue. For some unexplained reason he had been compelled by the Russian authorities to quit his see at Etchmiatzin, the Rome of the Armenians, and fix his residence in Tiflis, from whence I have since heard he has been transferred to St. Petersburg. The Patriarch is said to enjoy the highest popularity among his flock, and it is added that his talents, virtue, and learning, entitle him to all their veneration. If what we heard was true of the state of learning among the Armenian divines in general, this Patriarch must be a black swan among the prelacy and priesthood of that faith. Still it would be unjust to exact from them any great profundity of learning, sunk as they are in the lethargy and indolence of Persia, Turkey, and Russia. Their morals are reported not to be constructed according to the rules of a high or very rigid code; and of their theological depth I remember to have heard some amusing anecdotes. The following is one among the number:—A priest was asked why Christ suffered on the cross? He reflected some time, and replied, "Wallāh, I do not know; doubtless he committed some crime for which he was punished." Another anecdote is told of a priest in Hamadan, whose daughter was married to an Arme-

nian who went to India on business which detained him some time. During his absence the bishop heard that the priest had married his daughter to another man. On demanding an explanation of this unapostolic alliance, the diocesan received an indignant reply from the priest that he had mistaken his character, for he was incapable of aiding or abetting the sin of bigamy, and that all he had done was to pronounce a blessing for their living happily together until her husband should return.

Impatient to conclude our peregrination and reach our destination, we lost no time in resuming our journey. Travelling in Georgia is neither luxurious nor commodious, still it immensely surpasses all our experience of Southern Russia, particularly in the Mahommedan portion of the province. If horses were scarce at the post-houses, chickens and lambs, yoghourt and kymāk, those savoury preparations from milk so cherished all over Asia, were abundant. The invasive hordes of the post-houses, too, we heard, were less numerous, ferocious, and bloodthirsty, but we pressed on without stop or stay through a pretty country with groves of oak-trees scattered about, which afforded food for enormous droves of swine, in whose flesh the Georgians take special delight. When we arrived at the high mountains near the lake Gookcha, we left our carriage and walked up the pass. On reaching the summit of this high range, which forms the limit of Georgia proper, we had a noble prospect. On the left, at our feet, lay the beautiful lake of Sevān, the first sheet of water we had seen on this journey; before us were spread Armenia and the plains of Erivan, expanding far to the south; while on the right, dark, towering, and

frowning, lay the Karadagh, the Black Mountains, beyond Kars, stretching towards the Black Sea. At this interesting spot the postmaster had hospitably resolved not to confine our gratification to the pleasure of sight, and had prepared for us a most notable breakfast; at which we revelled on strawberry jam, made fresh from the fruit on the mountains, and the far-famed salmon trout, just out of the lake. Long after dark, at the conclusion of a toilsome journey over a detestable road, we reached Erivan. This was formerly the frontier town of Persia, from which kingdom it was conquered twenty-five years ago, after a vigorous resistance, during which the Russians were more than once repulsed, and were obliged to raise the siege. The loss was severe to Persia; as, instead of a strongly fortified town in the possession of the Shah, a narrow river now marks the frontier of the two countries. The strength of this fortress has been increased, it is said, to an extent that would render its capture exceedingly difficult, or perhaps impracticable, by a Turkish or Persian army. Not satisfied with the strength thus added to the frontier by the possession of this important post, the Russian Government has sought for farther security by constructing a fortress, or entrenched camp, at a spot named Gumri, a short distance to the north-west of Erivan. Gumri possesses farther interest to a traveller from its vicinity to some remarkable ruins situated within the Turkish frontier, named Ani, which it seems was once the capital of an Armenian kingdom (B.), for even the Armenians once had a kingdom. We ordered horses to be prepared without delay, resolving to make no

stay. While we were engaged in eating our dinner of cold potatoes in the more than ordinarily desolate post-house, we were surprised and somewhat put to confusion, travel-worn as we were, by a visit from the Governor in full uniform, who announced that most comfortable quarters and an excellent supper were awaiting us in the fort. Long-continued travelling makes one, I think, irritable and anxious to get forward; otherwise I know not what demon of perversity took possession of us to instigate us, in spite of our meagre fare, without prospect of improvement until next day, to refuse the hospitable offer. The worthy Count M——, ever studious of our comfort, did not disguise his vexation, and told us we should repent the rejection of the manna in the wilderness. His prophecy proved true, for at midnight our steeds declined farther work; so there we lay several hours on the road-side while they were refreshed at a neighbouring hamlet. In the morning we beheld the rising sun in great glory gilding the white peak of Aghree Dāgh, as the Turks and Persians call Mount Ararat; and then the whole mountain, towering and glittering aloft in its mantle of snow. The country hereabout being flat, and Ararat not being many miles distant, we beheld the mountain in all its solitary grandeur. Still it is not wholly solitary, for near it is a smaller mountain called Little Ararat, but the difference of height between it and its stupendous companion prevents any rivalry with the resting-place of the Ark. The traditions of the Armenians, who pretend that whoever surmounts the difficulty of the ascent will be rewarded with a sight of a

fragment of the veritable Ark, has been refuted by some Russian travellers, who within late years have claimed the honour of being the first to scan the summit of hoary Ararat. Previously to our detention during the night, we had passed Etchmiatzin, the principal see of the Armenian church, and residence of the Patriarch, from whence are despatched bishops—*Russian* bishops, in truth—not only to Persia, but to India, English India. In the latter empire they are doubtless innocuous, for their report to St. Petersburg can only be confirmatory of daily increasing wealth and prosperity; but in Persia it may be otherwise. The loss I suffered in not seeing this famous monastery, I was told, was merely one of fancy and association, as Etchmiatzin, or Utch Kilisiya, meaning Three Churches, as it is termed by the Turks and Persians, consists of nothing but three very plain monastic buildings or churches, situated in the midst of barren plains. It is to the Armenians an object of profound veneration from having been, as they relate, the seat of their first patriarch and patron, St. Gregory. Continuing our journey through a level plain we reached the venerable, but decayed, city of Nakhshewan, which, according to Armenian tradition, had no less a founder than Noah himself. The tomb of the great patriarch is placed in Nakhshewan by these Christians of strong faith, who, I am told, even pretend to show his grave.

His city is in a state of extreme dilapidation; the poorest bazars, scantily furnished with the humblest merchandise, and a small population of Armenians, being all that remains to mark a site which teemed with inhabitants

and wealth. The neat houses of the Russian authorities are a relief among the all-pervading decay which meets the eye. We lodged in the house of the Governor, as the captain of a few soldiers stationed here was styled. Our entertainer was most hospitable, and as this was the only opportunity for seeing anything of the interior of Russian life in a middle class, I must avail myself of it to declare that the impression it left was eminently favourable. The house of our host was good, but plain, substantial, and clean. We lived with him and his family, who fulfilled the ideas of the domesticity we are so prone to boast of as exclusively English. The table was good and perfectly in keeping with the rest of the establishment; still I hope I shall be pardoned a slight breach of the reserve enjoined by the laws of hospitality if I remark a gastronomic exploit which excited our amusement as well as our astonishment at the powers it revealed. Our hostess helped herself to a large bowl of soup, fattened in the proportions that Russians love, into which she poured half a bottle of the favourite beverage, London stout, adding eggs and sugar; after duly amalgamating which ingredients, she gave a plate of the fearful mixture to her only child, a pretty, delicate-looking, little girl, who seemed highly delighted and refreshed with the compound.

The Governor and his wife must have been heartily tired of us. They were both genuine Muscovites, not speaking a syllable of any language but their own, and consequently we were unable to communicate with each other unless by signs and contortions; still they were both thoroughly goodhumoured and amiable, submitting with

the best grace to our intrusion. We were detained three days waiting for notice of the arrival of tents and servants from Tabreez at the frontier on the Aras, distant only twenty miles from Erivan. At length the much-wished-for intelligence arrived, and in a few hours we were on the banks of that stream. Through some mismanagement respecting our baggage and carriage, the latter being again very near meeting a watery grave, we were forced to pass the night in Russia, at this quarantine station. A more miserable spot than Julfa (as this frontier post was called) we had not met, unless perhaps on the Kuban. The quarantine master had most obligingly given up the one room in his house for all our party, which room, by an ingenious device, was converted into two, while he and his subordinates retired to some den, as the quarantine houses here may truly be called. They are partly subterraneous, the roof being nearly level with the ground, and are entered by a slope which commences several yards from the door, and forms an apt conductor for the rain as it falls on the ground. The light is admitted by the door or a hole in the roof, exactly like the houses we afterwards saw in Turkish Armenia, on our return to England. Several years previously, my husband had passed fourteen days in quarantine at Julfa, in one of these caverns; which penance Russia has condemned all unfortunate travellers from Persia to undergo for reasons not fathomable—Persia in general, and above all Tabreez, and the entire province of Azerbijan, being incomparably superior in salubrity to Georgia. Unless politics lurk at the bottom, Julfa is a strange place for the establish-

ment of a sanitary station, and to be the medium for introducing sound health into Russia, it having a confirmed character for malaria during the summer.

Having expected to dine in Persia, it was only the charitable hospitality of the quarantine master which saved us from being dinnerless. The party was numerous and miscellaneous, presided over by the quarantine master, who was a Spanish gentleman, and a model of courtesy and dignity, which qualities he preserved under very trying circumstances. It was curious and amusing to see him alternately serving the soup and washing the plates, seated at table. He performed both offices with a solemn gravity which a Spaniard only could assume, and which entirely overcame the feeling of his being engaged in a menial occupation.

We here bade adieu to our attentive and amiable friend Count M——, who had accompanied us so long a distance. Willingly, had his commander sanctioned it, would he have accepted our invitation to be our guest to Tehran, or at least Tabreez, as he would have had a fair chance of decorating his breast with what a Russian loves so dearly, another cross or star—I mean the Lion and Sun—which it would have been possible to have obtained for him. It is strange with what avidity Russian officers covet these equivocal marks of honour—honourable, and highly so, when fairly won, but contemptible when bestowed through caprice and favour. I remember perfectly well hearing in Persia of various occasions on which the Russian Minister solicited the decoration of the Lion and Sun for this ——off and that ——ski, who had

glorified the arms of Russia in Circassia, and whose feats of arms Persia was called on to reward.

Sunrise came, and in a few minutes we were shoved in the most primitive of boats over the Aras. We offered a farewell to Russia with grateful feelings for the prodigal attentions which had been showered on us. Russia is often reviled, but if we were to judge of the national character by what we saw, candour would oblige us to declare that intelligence, cordiality, and liberality are the prevailing qualities. Much of course was due to official position, but every Englishman, whatever his rank, travelling in Russia has hitherto always met with kindness and attention. This has not been, as I said before, from love or liking; for I doubt not that every one felt, at least every one of reflection felt, that a crisis between the two nations was impending,—that the day was approaching when it must be decided whether the East or the West of Europe, the Sclavonian or the Celto-German race, was to be predominant. But I am touching on politics, a domain from which I have resolved to exclude myself. What struck me more than anything else in Russia was the disregard of the upper classes for the feelings of their servants and dependents. They seemed to me to look on and to treat them as inferior animals. They seem to have no rooms allotted for their use; the lobby and the ante-room are their apartments, and the bare bench is their bed. We heard a curious fact at Stavropol, which I may as well relate in this place:—A landed proprietor perceived in one of his young serfs a decided talent and inclination for painting.

He sent the lad to Rome, and there education made him not only a first-rate painter, but also developed his mind on every subject. At the end of some years he was recalled to Russia by his master, who found him too valuable to give him his freedom; and this well-educated gentleman is actually a slave of the nobleman who sent him to Italy, and obliged to paint for his benefit. I cannot imagine a more melancholy fate.

CHAPTER VI.

Arrival in Persia — Aspect of the country — Want of population — Warlike costume — The unfortunate cow — Marand — The Azan — Our entrance to Tabreez — First impression of a Persian city — Frequent earthquakes — The Ark — Kajar's coffee — Climate of Tabreez — The angel Gabriel's address to Adam in Turkish — Languages in use in Persia.

October 29th.—HERE then we were at length in Persia, the land of Cyrus, Darius, and Alexander. We think of the millions of Xerxes, the Great King; we contemplate the barren scene spread before the eyes, and ask where they all came from. Sterile indeed was the prospect, and unhappily it proved to be an epitome of all the scenery in Persia, excepting on the coast of the Caspian. A desolate plain, or rather valley, bounded on each side by rocky or chalky mountains still more desolate—not a tree visible excepting the few willows, poplars, and fruit-trees surrounding the villages thinly scattered over the waste. Such is Persia and her scenery in general, excepting that sometimes a fine village is to be seen smothered in immense gardens, orchards of the most delicious fruits, and vineyards. These bright spots are, however, not numerous; and the curt description of a Scottish traveller of what he saw in Persia is not altogether devoid of truth. According to him, the whole land is divided into two portions—one being desert with salt, and the other desert without salt. Fruit, nevertheless, is abundant and cheap,

owing to extensive cultivation in the neighbourhood of towns. Near the villages corn is so widely cultivated that extensive plains of wheat and barley are spread on all sides; for desolate as looks the soil, all it wants is population and water to make it fruitful. Sometimes the traveller passes for miles through a plain, or over mountains far remote from human habitation, covered with aromatic plants, from which the most delicious spicy odours are exhaled. Yet the general aspect of the land is one of extreme barrenness; one may often, and very often, travel twenty or thirty miles without seeing a habitation or a blade of verdure; and in some parts of Persia these distances amount to hundreds of miles. From whence, then, did the enormous hosts of yore proceed —the millions of the weeping Xerxes? Greek and Persian exaggeration and bombast, in which both nations are still supereminent, might account for much; still the country must have been in a very different state from what we behold it to admit of even a distant approach to the numbers recorded by historians as having marched to the invasion of Greece. The incursions from Tartary have no doubt contributed to reduce the country to its present depopulated state. Blood marked their track: above all, the generals sent by Chengeez, the leaders of the Moghul hosts, seemed to have been incarnations of Izraeel and Israfeel, the Angels of Death. Submission or resistance seems to have been equally fatal; and slaughter—the indiscriminate slaughter of the young and the aged, of man and of woman—was the lot of the wretched population in both cases. In this way the inhabitants of the immense city of Reï, near Tehran, were exterminated. Toos, in Khorassan,

suffered the same desolation. Hostile armies, and the slow though sure hand of oppression, have laid waste these lands, and reduced them to a scanty population, or to a dreary solitude, where the useless wandering Toork and Lek erect their miserable habitations.

Before we stepped out of our frail boat I had covered my face with a thick veil, and, after much persuasion, induced my two attendant countrywomen to follow the example. They thought this a great hardship; but I did not wish to shock the prejudices of the Mahommedans, who would have despised us, if unveiled, as people wholly divested of common propriety. A novel and busy scene awaited us on the Persian bank of the river. A number of the mission servants, Gholams, Peeshkhidmets, Ferashes, had been sent from Tehran to meet us. The Prince Governor of the province of Azerbijan, in which we now had arrived, had despatched from his capital, Tabreez, a mehmandar, of the rank of brigadier, with a large suite and escort, to receive the English Minister on setting foot in Persia, and to conduct him to Tabreez. The neighbouring villages had also sent their contributions of the feudal cavalry, holding land on the tenure of military service. A litter, or takhterewan, literally *moving sofa*, covered with bright scarlet cloth, and supported by two mules also covered with scarlet, together with a kajāwa (a sort of box on each side of a mule, used by women and invalids travelling) for the women servants, had been sent for my use; but in my inexperience of Persian roads, I preferred remaining in the carriage, from whence I had the advantage of gazing at the wild figures and the novel scene before me. A Persian on horseback, prepared for

war or a journey, is to the eye, at all events, a formidable personage. He is armed from top to toe: a long gun at his back, a pistol at his waist, another behind, a sword at his left, a tremendous dagger called a kamma at his right, while at his belt dangles an infinity of horns for various sorts of ammunition—powder for loading, powder for priming, balls, &c. Add to this a swarthy visage half hid in a long black beard, a tall cap of lambskin, immense trousers, boots, red or black, to the knee, a shaggy yaponcha on his shoulder, a short chibouk under the flap of his saddle, and the Persian horseman is complete. He and his horse are a brisk, active-looking pair, though hardly equal to our rough friends on the Kuban; yet I have been told that in the last war with Russia the real irregular cavalry of Persia, that is, the horsemen of the tribes and the Koordish cavalry, never hesitated to face and generally to overcome the Cossacks.

Colonel S—— and the Brigadier were old friends; my husband having many years previously had charge of the drill and discipline of a regiment of the Shah's guards, in which the Brigadier was a captain. After they had finished their salams, and asked each other some twenty times if their "noses were fat," that is, if their spirits were good, we set forth. A number of horsemen rushed on in front, and spread themselves over the plain. Some among them played Ky-kaj—that is, a horseman gallops at full speed pursued by another, both unslinging their long guns. It is very amusing to observe the foppery, grace, and attitude with which the young cavaliers perform this operation. The leader turns straight round in his saddle, and aims a shot at his pursuer, who bends

down below the horse's neck to evade the imaginary ball. This they do at full speed, loading and firing with the utmost dexterity, galloping furiously over the most dangerous and broken ground. I am told that a Persian is a very powerful rider, but that his "hand" is so desperately rough as to deprive the horse's mouth of nearly all sensation. He is said to be far inferior to the Hindostanee horseman in grace and dexterous feats on horseback, such as jerking out with his lance a tent-pin deeply fixed in the ground, the horse at half-speed; or galloping in a circle round his lance, the point on the ground, and the other end on his arm: but that in energetic, bold riding, which stops at nothing, the Persian infinitely surpasses the turbaned cavaliers of India. The whole nation seems to ride by instinct. I have often seen our scullions, or other servants, placed accidentally on a horse for the first time in their lives, scamper away with perfect fearlessness. Others among our cortège played at the jereed for our amusement. A horseman holds poised in his hand a thick stick, four feet in length; he rushes at full speed, and dashes the point on the ground so as to cause it to rebound high in the air, and catches it, if he can, that is to say, before it reaches the earth, though I must confess I never saw a single jereed player succeed in this feat. A thorough horseman ought to pick up his fallen jereed without leaving the saddle; but the success of this, like the other exploit, seems to be traditional.

Such is the way in which Persians of rank beguile the tedium of the march; adding to these amusements the resources of chibouks and kaleeans, and sometimes a cup of sugarless coffee. The poor horses suffer; but a Per-

sian, though he seldom flogs his horse, or punishes him from ill temper, seems to consider him, by the severity of his treatment, as made only to endure fatigues and hardships.

Our route lay through a long defile, over the most execrable road—apparently the bed of the mountain torrent—that ever an unhappy carriage from Long Acre was destined to roll. It was literally composed of great blocks of rock, each piece distant from its neighbour two or three feet, over which the carriage pitched, strained, and creaked like a ship in a gale of wind. All this pitching and heaving caused me the liveliest alarm, lest it should eventuate in a fracture which all Azerbijan could not repair. The Persian postilions, however, took the matter with great coolness and great skill. They had been artillery drivers, and treated the vehicle with the same indifference as their gun, and fortunately no misfortune occurred. A short march of twelve miles brought us to our camp. The Prince Governor had most considerately sent a suite of tents for our accommodation; and on entering the principal one we found a beautiful and most ample collation of fruits and sweetmeats. His Royal Highness seemed resolved we should imagine ourselves still in Europe. The table (for there was one) was covered with a complete and very handsome European service in plate, glass, and china, and, to crown the whole, six bottles of champagne displayed their silvery heads, accompanied by a dozen other bottles of the wines of France and Spain. I thought within myself that this was a strange mode of carrying out the precepts of the Koran, little dreaming of the

real state of the case in Persia. I came to the conclusion that, under certain circumstances, the prejudices of the Mussulman had yielded to the hospitality of the Eelyat, or tribeman, to his guest. With Oriental delicacy an anderoon, or haram, had been prepared for me, consisting of a small tent lined with gaily striped silk, besides tents for women servants, the whole surrounded by a high wall of canvas, furnishing a tolerably large enclosure, in which I could remain in entire seclusion.

Two days' more travelling, of about sixteen miles a day, brought us to the small town of Marand. On approaching within two or three miles, we were met by a large concourse of people, headed by the Governor, all come out to pay their compliments to the English Elchee. This is a general practice in Persia, and its omission is considered a slight. To make assurance doubly sure, I am told the Russians have gone so far as to make a treaty on the subject, defining all the honours, the sweetmeats, the sugar, the visits from the Prime Minister downwards, which they are entitled to exact. It seems we have not been so tenacious of our dignity, but I never heard we had anything to complain of in matters of etiquette; and I can bear personal testimony that the saccharine part of the treaty was as scrupulously observed in our regard as if we had been contracting parties.

At every station, from the Aras to Tehran, the first thing I beheld on entering the room was several pounds of tea, flanked by a suitable number of loaves of sugar, with a whole cargo of sweetmeats, on which the Persian servants regaled themselves with all the greediness of children.

Our entrance to Marand was distinguished by a most disagreeable ceremony, which was attempted to be repeated at every village at which we halted, not only on this but on every succeeding journey during our residence in Persia. On approaching the town, I observed an unfortunate cow in the midst of the crowd, close to the roadside, held down by the head and feet; when we came within a yard or so of the miserable animal, a man brandished a large knife, with which he instantly, before there was time for interference, severed its head from its body. He then ran across our road with the head, allowing the blood to flow on our path in torrents, and we passed on to encounter a repetition of the same cruel rites performed on various sheep. This ceremony was called Korbān, or sacrifice, these poor creatures having been immolated in order that all the misfortunes, evils, and disasters, which might overtake us, should fall on them; and fall on them they assuredly did. So intent are the Persians on the observance of this mark of reverence to power and station, that the most rigid prohibition could hardly prevent its fulfilment. We passed through the town, headed by a body of Ferashes, or footmen, carrying long rods, emblems of their office of executioners when the bastinado is inflicted. They drove aside the crowd, shouting from time to time Birooeed, Birooeed! (begone, begone), occasionally using their rods on those whose curiosity exceeded their discretion. It was on the women, however, that these modern lictors, who are skilled in all the varieties of torture, principally inflicted their castigation. If an unlucky damsel, though veiled from head to foot, peeped out from a door or over a wall,

half-a-dozen of these myrmidons rushed at her, and drove her away with blows and imprecations. We were lodged in a very commodious house, belonging to a holy syed or descendant of the Prophet, whose countenance did not present a very amiable aspect when he beheld a herd of Kafirs, as he deemed us, taking possession of his domicile to the exclusion of his own family. The word Giaour, so usual in Turkey, is unknown in Persia, unless on the borders of Turkey, although perhaps derived from the Persian word Gebr, meaning the fire-worshippers of the ancient race. The syed was constantly passing to and fro, casting black looks at the intruders, while the ladies of his family peeped at us from a distant stable where they had taken up their temporary abode, dying with curiosity to pay a visit to a woman who wore "trousers with one leg," but interdicted by the presence of strangers. This is the name which Persian women have given to gowns and petticoats of European fashion, to distinguish them from their own trousers. In the morning, however, before the hour of departure, a tolerable fee for the use of his house relaxed the grimness of our host's features; and smiles, bows, and ejaculations of "Khoosh geldin, seffā goturdin" (welcome, your presence is an ornament), showed that his bigotry was not proof against even an infidel's gold. But to do justice to the Persians, it must be allowed that to travellers they are most hospitable. This was the only occasion on which I observed any reluctance to receive us as inmates; and I heard from the other European residents of Tehran, that, excepting in Mazenderan, where the bigotry of the inhabitants, owing to their remoteness and

little intercourse with strangers, is supreme, they never experienced any difficulty in finding accommodation in the villages in any part of Persia. It was at Marand that I first heard the Azān, or call of the Mussulmans to prayer, so solemn and impressive, especially when well chanted, for it is in fact a chant. On the roof of a neighbouring mosque, which from its modest, unpretending appearance resembled a private house, I perceived a Moolla whose head, instead of the ordinary black lambskin cap, was covered with a large green turban to show his descent from Mahommed. He turned towards Mecca, and placing his open hands to his head, proclaimed with a loud sonorous voice, "Allāh ho akbar," which he repeated four times; then "Eshhedo enna la illaha illellāh"—(I bear witness there is no God but God), twice; then "Eshhedo enna Mahammedan resool Allāh"—(I bear witness that Mahommed is the Prophet of God), twice; then I "bear witness that Ali, the Commander of the Faithful, is the friend of God," &c. If a Persian were to proclaim the last sentiment aloud in any part of Turkey it would cost him his life. It is the shibboleth between the great Mussulman sects of Soonnee and Sheah, the former being professed by the Turks and the majority of the Mussulman world, and the latter by the Persians. There seems to be little or no difference in doctrine between the two religions, excepting that, by the Sheahs, Ali, the son-in-law of Mahommed, is regarded as his successor; while, according to their rivals, Abubekr, Omar, and Osman take precedence. I may add that the Soonnees eat hares and porcupines, which the Persians consider an abomination. The point of dissension being small, the rivalry and ani-

mosity are great. The Persians, however, fare worst in the dispute; for Mecca, Kerballa, and all the other shrines of Sheah veneration and pilgrimage, are in the hands of the Turks. The Iranees are forced on such occasions to ignore their own faith and adopt the outward forms of Soonneeism. This laxity is lawful and even prescribed in the Sheah creed, but is never practised among Turks or other Soonnees, who admit of no concealment or equivocation in matters of faith, even to escape from the crown of martyrdom.

The single toll in the knell for transporting the dead to their last earthly abode arouses, perhaps from association, ideas of profound solemnity; so too does the trumpet echoing through the camp when it ushers the dragoon to his grave; but above both, in solemn awe, is the keening as it sweeps afar over the dales and hills of Munster, announcing that a Gael has been gathered to his fathers. The Azan excites a different impression. It raises in the mind a combination of feelings, of dignity, solemnity, and devotion, compared with which the din of bells becomes insignificant. It is an imposing thing to hear in the dead of the night the first sounds of the Muezzin proclaiming "Allāh ho Akbar—Mighty is the Lord—I bear witness there is no God but God!" St. Peter's and St. Paul's together can produce nothing equal to it.

Three easy stages over a very tolerable road, through valleys with mountains on both sides, sometimes near, sometimes more distant, brought us to Tabreez on the 2nd of November. Here preparations on a grand scale were made for a solemn entry, from which I, however, as

belonging to the inferior and ignoble class of womankind, was excluded, though I was permitted to gaze on the scene at a distance. It was difficult to say how many thousand people had assembled, or what class of persons had not come forth to do honour to the Queen of England's representative. There were princes and priests, and merchants, and moollas, and mountebanks, and dervishes, and beggars; there were Koordish and Toork horsemen of the tribes, and soldiers, and Ghoolams; in short there was everything and everybody, but there was not a single woman, for in Persia a woman is nobody. The cavalcade began four miles from the town, and each step brought a fresh reinforcement to the procession, or istikbal, as it is called. The visitors approached the envoy, and after paying their compliments and congratulations, rode by his side or fell behind according to their rank. The advance was slow, the dust stifling, the fatigue of complimenting several thousand people overwhelming; but careful of the exhausted envoy, and the Russian treaty on etiquette moreover not being out of his view, his royal highness the Prince Governor had prepared a tent midway where the grandees of the istikbal alighted, smoked kalleeans and chibouks, drank tea and coffee, and partook of the everlasting sweetmeats. To horse again, with a greater crowd than ever! more beggars, more lootees or mountebanks with their bears and monkeys, more dervishes vociferating for inām or bakhshish, heaping praises and blessings without measure on Alā Hezret Padshah e Inglis—her Majesty the Queen of England, and Junābe Elchee—his Excellency the Envoy, and uttering loud benedictions on Hezret Eesā and Hezret e

Miriam—the Lord Jesus and the Blessed Mary. These latter benedictions surprised me, but I afterwards learned that, with the exception of the denial of his divinity, and the assertion of his being second to Mahommed, and to Mahommed only, the veneration of Mussulmans for our Saviour nearly equals our own. They rarely allude to him without using the words Hezret Eesā alehoos salām—the Lord Jesus, on whom be blessings. They believe him to have been a special creation of the Almighty, like Adam, by his will alone. Their reverence for the Blessed Virgin too is not much inferior to the homage of the church of Rome, the Russo-Greek church, and all the churches of the East. The tall white lily is, in Persian, called the Goole Miriam, or Flower of Mary; and in a Persian painting representing the Annunciation, lilies are growing round her.

The throng now reached the town; and here began the tug of war. The deep broad ditch surrounding the city was crossed by a narrow causeway, over which the multitude passed. The leaders had no difficulty; but when the reckless crowd arrived—for a Persian on horseback is thoroughly reckless—every one pressing forward, despite of kicking and fighting horses, the confusion and uproar may be imagined. However, they all got through at last, though whether with any killed and wounded, or not, I cannot tell; and I brought up the rear, and entered the city covered with dust, and hot and tired. Anything more dismal can hardly be conceived. The images of youth are not easily effaced; and the 'Arabian Nights' and 'Lalla Rookh' will hold their place in the memory, whether it will or not. But once inside the gate of a

Persian city, the charm is dissolved, the magician's wand is broken, and reality takes the place of romance, which is destroyed for ever. Half the city seemed depopulated; there were large spaces wholly vacant, with deep excavations on either hand, from which the earth had been dug to build houses. Dead dogs, and here and there a dead horse half eaten, offended more than one sense. The houses were frightful. Constructed of brown unburnt bricks, looking exactly like mud, and without a single window to the street, they presented a most gloomy aspect. This is a general picture of a Persian town; and be it remembered that Tabreez is one of the best and richest cities in the whole kingdom. As we approached the European and Armenian quarter some improvement began to be visible. A few of the houses had windows, here and there an ornamental gateway appeared, and some attempt at embellishment was made by means of paint. Still the sombre brick and a general air of decay, maintained supremacy. It is nevertheless only the outside of a Persian house which looks so comfortless. The interior of those belonging to the better classes are very commodious, and often of great size.

On arriving at the British Government-house the first thing that I saw was a whole roomful of sweetmeats—sugar-candy and refined sugar—sent by the Prince Governor as a mark of congratulation. Every festival is celebrated in this way. The Queen's birthday, our new-year's day, the Persian new-year's day, invariably brought in each succeeding year a supply from the Shah, carried by his majesty's ferashes through the most public parts of the town, on immense trays, covered with embroidered

silk. The etiquette was to send back the covers, which I confess I used to do with reluctance; for they were sometimes very handsome. An omission in these matters is looked on as a slight, which the Russians are careful in avoiding, by notifying to the minister for foreign affairs his imperial majesty's birthday, fête-day, saint's-day, and the other host of festivals which the Muscovites love to solemnise. These honours are rather costly, the bearers of these sweetmeats not being at all satisfied unless they receive a donation to the amount of twelve or fifteen pounds sterling. His majesty, who is of a very affable and amiable disposition, during his hunting excursions near Tehran often sends a few partridges or hares to the foreign representatives, as a mark of his favour; and it is little exaggeration to say that each head of game costs its weight in silver.

We passed five days in Tabreez. The weather was cold and cheerless, and I remained most of the time in solitary seclusion; while my husband was employed the whole time in receiving and returning visits. A Persian visit is a formidable ceremony, involving a prodigious consumption of time. Pipes, coffee; pipes, tea; and then pipes twice again, is the usual routine. They are a vivacious, intelligent people; and I am told the men are often agreeable in conversation, relating anecdotes, and quoting passages from poetry and history with readiness and animation. Still a Persian visit is said to be in general extremely tiresome. The conversation of a visitor is entirely about himself, his maladies, his disasters; his pay has been stopped; his mill has been seized; his stream of water has been carried off; his

garden has been pledged; his debts are burdensome; the interest of a hundred per cent. is oppressive, &c. &c., to the end of the chapter. Like a Frenchman, whom he is said to resemble in many points, his thoughts are centred in his own person; and he seems to think his affairs are as interesting to others as to himself. On hearing those details of bodily ailments we were often reminded of the lines—

> "Some men employ their health—an ugly trick,
> In telling us how oft they have been sick;
> And give us, in recitals of disease,
> A doctor's trouble—but without the fees."

Tabreez is represented to be a city of great antiquity. Hanway, who travelled about the year 1730, describes it to have been in former times one of the finest cities of the East. Its environs, many miles in extent, to the S.W., are covered with mounds, heaps of ruins and rubbish, denoting the positions of ancient structures. It possesses some interest as being the site of one of the cities near which Mark Antony is supposed to have passed in his retreat from Persia. Three centuries ago it is reported to have contained five hundred thousand inhabitants; but war, anarchy, and earthquake have sadly reduced its populousness. In the last century it was two or three times devastated by the last-named calamity. The city was nearly overthrown in 1721.; and tens of thousands perished on that occasion. Even now repeated shocks are felt, sometimes to a most alarming extent, every year, warning the citizens against a catastrophe. In many houses the precaution has been adopted of constructing a wooden room as a place of refuge in the hour of danger. I found,

to my great satisfaction, having no experience in earthquakes, an apartment of this kind in the government-house, but to which happily there was no need to have recourse. A year afterwards, in Tehran, while lying ill in an upper room, I felt a curious sensation, like the shaking of a steamboat. I rushed out of the room, down the stairs; for I suspected what it was, and feared a repetition of it. There was, however, only one shock; and I never felt any other during my stay in Persia.

Though fallen from its high estate, even now Tabreez is considered one of the finest cities in Persia, both in population and wealth. It is situated at the end of a large plain, bounded on the north by high hills, and on the south at some miles distant, by the lake Shahee. The inhabitants are supposed to exceed 100,000 in number; but a large portion live in suburbs outside the walls. The city is nearly surrounded by immense gardens and orchards, producing in perfection and profusion almost all the fruits of Southern Europe, particularly melons and grapes. It is a city of extensive commerce, being the great mart between Turkey, Russia, and Central Persia. The extent of its trade may be appreciated from the fact, that English goods to the value of nearly a million sterling are, I am told, annually imported within its walls; whence they are again exported to Central Persia, Khorassan, the shores of the Caspian, to the Toorcomans, and even to Khiva. These imports consist chiefly of Manchester goods and cloth; and it is a curious circumstance that a very large portion should be imported to Persia by Greeks. The great houses of commerce are chiefly Greek; and from some sort of national or natural im-

pulse they all have adopted Russian protection. The most remarkable building that I saw in Tabreez was an enormous pile of brick, some seventy feet high, situated in what is called the Ark, or Citadel, which is supposed to be exceedingly ancient. The use to which this now ruinous edifice has been lately converted, is that of casting from its summit women who have been guilty of the murder of their husbands. This crime, if not as common, or at all events not as often detected as in England, is not unfrequent in Persia. The jealousies and animosities of the haram often drive its inmates to vengeance by means of the "Kahwa e Kajaree," the Kajar's coffee. Kajār is the tribe-name of the reigning dynasty; and the allusion is to the poisoning of the cup, which that family has been accused of practising.

One scarcely expects to meet in the north of Persia reminiscences of the caliphs of Bagdad; yet it seems that Tabreez was a favourite residence of our old acquaintance the Commander of the Faithful, Haroun al Raschid, or more correctly Haroon ur Rasheed, who sleeps at Meshed. On leaving Tabreez, about the 6th of November, I was shown, not far from the gate, the ruins of a once beautiful mosque, covered and faced with enamelled azure, yellow, and black tiles. Tradition ascribes its construction to Zobeida.

Though only in the 38th degree of latitude, the cold at Tabreez, owing to its elevation above the sea, is intense; and from the same reason the heat in summer is temperate. Its height is more than 4500 feet; and the thermometer falls to 15° below zero. Add to this, that during winter a violent wind frequently blows from the north, producing

a degree of cold which deters the inhabitants from leaving their houses, and causing the death of many unfortunate travellers who fail to reach a place of refuge at night. The climate is healthy, in spite of the cholera, which often, in conjunction with the plague, makes horrible ravages.

This reminds me of a curious circumstance which I heard relative to the women of the upper classes of Tabreez. Instead of being stricken with fear at the rumour of these scourges, these capricious ladies hail with glee the approach of cholera or plague, which to them brings freedom and release from monotony. Wearied with every-day life, they joyfully prepare to quit the city and seek refuge in the yēïlāks (the high summer mountain lands), in which and in a tent-life all Persians delight. Here there is comparative freedom from restraint; and here the ladies of Tabreez enjoy the charms of listening to purling streams, and the pleasure of eating lamb kebāb (roast) fresh from the flock.

It surprises one to find oneself in almost the chief city of Persia, and yet not to hear a word of Persian spoken. In the streets and bazars Turkish is the only language which strikes the ear. It seems to be exceedingly rough and uncouth. By way of illustrating its harshness and fitness for command, the Persians say that when Adam was doomed to quit Paradise, the angel Gabriel conveyed the commands from heaven to the first sinners in Persian, but without effect, for Adam refused to obey. Gabriel then tried Arabic, Sanscrit, and all other languages now known, without result, till, in despair and in ire, he roared out in Turkish "Kiopek oghlee, chik boorden" (Be off,

you dog!), on which Adam scampered off without farther delay. Turkish is so completely the colloquial language of Azerbijan, that, excepting in towns, and even there only among the better classes, Persian is not understood. The dialect of Turkish used in Azerbijan is not very unlike that spoken at Constantinople; but in the latter city the pronunciation has been so refined, polished, and effeminated, as one may say—while in Persia the original harsh, vigorous accent has been preserved—that the two nations are scarcely comprehensible to each other. Turkish, I found, is all but universal in Persia. It is the prevailing language to within a hundred miles of Tehran, as far as Kasveen, where it is as constantly employed as Persian. At court Persian is used on state occasions; but at other times the royal family, amounting to two or three thousand princes and princesses, delight in the tongue which their forefathers brought from the walls of China, or even from Pekin; for there is a tradition that the tribe of Kajār, like the valiant English Varangians in Constantinople, formed the bodyguard of the sovereigns of the Celestial Empire. The central and southern parts of Persia are full of Toork tribes, who have preserved their language. In the Caspian provinces of Geelan and Mazenderan, dialects of Persian are the prevailing tongues. The mountaineers belonging to the genuine Persian tribes of Koords and Leks still preserve their native idioms, and with the above, seem to be the only inhabitants of Persia among whom the Toork invaders have failed to plant their language.

If Chinese be the most extensively written language in

the world, since millions speaking different dialects are still able to read the same character, it may be difficult to determine whether English, Spanish, or Turkish be the most diffused orally throughout the world. From Belgrade to the Wall of Ċhina, the traveller who is master of the language of Toork Yāfet oghlee—Toork, the son of Japhet, as his descendants fondly believe him to be—need be at no loss. With varying modifications, he will find Turkish throughout that vast extent, either in the soft lisping of Constantinople, or in the rough gutturals of the Toorkomans, the Uzbeks, the Kirghees, or the roving Toork tribes of Mongolia.

Azerbijan, of which Tabreez is the capital, is the most valuable province of Persia, and is bounded on the north by Russia and on the east by Turkey. In climate, fertility of the soil, population, and also, I hear, in the military qualities, the vigour, and energy of the inhabitants, it far excels the other parts of Persia. Its surface is undulating and intermingled with mountains of great height, which afford a cool retreat during summer to the wandering and pastoral tribes with which the province abounds, as well as to their flocks. Unlike most other parts of Persia, large tracts of cultivated land are dēm, or unirrigated, the necessary moisture being derived from dews or occasional rain, and corn is produced in such abundance that a large quantity is annually exported to Georgia, which is deficient in the supply of that grain. Azerbijan abounds also in mineral wealth. The district of Karadāgh contains mines, where copper and iron are procurable to an extent almost unlimited. The iron ore is in some places so pure, that the mountains are said to be formed of that substance.

Such is the perversity of Persians, that with copper in profusion at their own doors, it is only lately they ceased to import that mineral from Turkey. Sir Henry Bethune brought out several years ago a steam-engine and a number of artificers to work these mines; but everything decays in Persia, and so too has this undertaking. Besides Tabreez, Azerbijan contains several considerable towns, such as Oöroomeeya, Khoce, Ardebil, Maragha, where Hoolakoo Khan, the grandson of Chengeez, established his capital, and constructed a famous observatory. The inhabitants are chiefly Toorks, and are supposed, like the Turks, to be the descendants of the Seljookee and Mongolian invaders. The Russians overran this province in the last war, which occurred thirty years ago. All the chief towns were in their possession, and fortunately for Persia, they evacuated it, but only on the payment of more than two millions sterling—a heavy disbursement for a Persian monarch. I have heard that Russian officials have often expressed their regret at a moderation, as they termed it, proceeding from their ignorance. They did not then know, I have been told, the value of Azerbijan, its resources in corn, and the capacity of its inhabitants for the military profession. They forgot that, holding this province in their hands, Persia would be for ever cut off from direct communication with Europe; and they did not foresee the commerce in English and other European merchandize, which a few years later was to spring up and attain such unexpected proportions between Constantinople and Trebizond, and which, passing through Erzeroom and Byazeed to Azerbijan, would undersell their manufactures at Asterabad and Meshed. So jealous is Russia of this intercourse and of the lucrative

transit trade carried on through Turkey with such profit to the latter empire, that she has more than once formed schemes for attracting it to her own territory, by making Poti and Redout Kaleh, in the Black Sea, on the coast of Mingrelia, free ports. She never was able to succeed in this plan. Commerce is so free in Turkey, that in spite of the superior safety of the road through Georgia—in spite of the danger on the frontier of Turkey and Persia from Koords and other freebooters, who have repeatedly pillaged immense caravans—in spite of the terrible winter journey from Trebizond to Tabreez—the Russian Government has never been able to induce the traders to subject themselves to the vexations inseparable from intercourse with Russian Custom-house authorities.

CHAPTER VII.

Mode of travelling — Village houses — Economical fires — Mephitic springs — Savalandagh — Shrine of a prophet — Toorkomanchall — Snow drift — Journeys of the couriers — Struggles through the snow — The "Leopard's Pass" — Tribe of Shaheesevens migrating — Sagacious donkeys and hideous old women — Sultaneeya and its dome — Iljaëtoo Khan — Mode of irrigation in Persia — Kasveen — Our host — The Old Man of the Mountain — Alamoot — Hunting seat of Fetteh Ali Shah — Innumerable family of that monarch — Hall of Audience — Agha Mahommed Khan Kajjar — Plucking out of 70,000 pairs of eyes — Waiting for good luck — My entry into Tehran — Entry of Colonel Sheil.

On the 5th of November we resumed our journey, travelling by easy stages, which, with a diminution of fatigue, were a great increase of ennui. The barren hills and nearly equally barren plains of Persia produce a most somniferous effect on the plodding wayfarer, particularly if he travels, as I did, in a carriage at a walking pace. The road was described to be excellent, still it reduced our vehicle to the slowest pace. Even this was preferable to the ordinary mode of travelling among ladies, shut up in a large box, called a takhterewān, suspended between two mules, in which one creeps along with ambassadorial dignity, in a way that put one's patience to a severe trial. In a mountainous country this same box exposes the inmate to some danger and a great deal of terror. On a narrow road, with a deep precipice on one side without a parapet, and mules that neither prayers, blows, nor abuse will remove from the very edge, one sees the box hanging over the yawning gulf, and the occupant dares not move lest the

balance be disturbed, and she wilfully seek her own salvation before due time. The two English maids were mounted one on each side of a mule in the two small boxes of a kajāva, where, compressed into the minutest dimensions, they balanced each other and sought consolation in mutual commiseration of their forlorn fate in this barbarian land.

I doubt if our hardships will excite the sympathy they deserve. We rose at six, shivering 5000 feet above the sea, in an Azerbijan village room, quite comfortless, at that hour at all events, and crawled along until ten, when we found ready for us, pitched near a stream in some quiet nook, a very small tent, called an aftabgerdān, or sun-turner, in which denomination correctness has been sacrificed to conciseness, as it is the tent which turns round to catch or exclude the sun's rays, according to the season. Here, seated on the ground, we had breakfast, and were warmed into life and consciousness by that genuine friend of mankind, whether the thermometer be at 20° or 120°, hot tea. When the horses of our numerous party were rested, we continued our journey until evening, and passed the night at a village house, to which our bedding had previously been carried, and then spread on the ground. From the time I entered Persia until I quitted it, the ground, whether in house or in tent, was my bedstead. This is the universal practice of the country, and, excepting that it affords no protection from scorpions, centipedes, and tarantulas, it is to be recommended. Nervous people take various precautions against these unwelcome visitors. I knew a foreign young lady, who had a Cossack, sword in hand, keeping watch all night in her room, ready

to slay the invaders. The bed tied up into a bundle, with a gaudy silk cover during the day, makes an excellent sofa in the corner of a tent. These houses are often good, but sometimes exceedingly disagreeable from the miscellaneous nature of the occupants. A thriving Persian village can, however, generally supply a tenement by no means to be contemned. The principal room where the family resides is carpeted with felts; a high pile of bedding, tied into bundles, occupies one corner, while another corner contains chests or immense jars, such as the "forty thieves" found a shelter in, filled with grain, peas, or beans. Strings of apricots, grapes, and onions hang in festoons from the ceiling; shelves are cut into the earthen walls, on which are placed stores of quinces, apples, pears, and melons, besides sundry cups and saucers, with, if possible, a few decanters and tumblers of coarse Russian glass, which form the pride of the family; one end of the room is occupied by a fireplace, over which are hung inscriptions containing quotations from the Koran, or from some of the Persian poets. Altogether there is a considerable air of substantial comfort in these houses, which I often envied for our countrymen. Sometimes these fireplaces were constructed on principles so anti-Rumfordian, that we were forced to have recourse to the Persian economical substitute for a fire in a grate, called a koorsee, and a very comfortable resource it is. A small quantity of charcoal, well burnt to remove its deleterious effects, is placed on a flat copper dish; this is covered with a large wooden frame, open at the sides, two feet high, over which a large wadded quilt is spread, to exclude the cold air and prevent the escape of the warmth inside. The family sits round the

koorsee with the legs and arms under the quilt, where the heat is considerable. I have often wished our soldiers at Sebastopol, during the memorable winter, could have procured this simple manner of protecting themselves from cold. Once when travelling alone during winter, my husband was seized with acute illness, which forced him to take refuge in a village, where a barber gave him a lodging. He passed the cold and painful night reclining under a koorsee, the opposite side of which was occupied by the loudly snoring, friendly barber. The whole family, in a Persian household, passes the winter nights in this manner; but sometimes an unlucky wight gets his head under the quilt, and wakes no more.

The second day from Tabreez we crossed the pass of Shiblee, near which are some caverns containing springs, still more mephitic than those of canine reputation at Lago Lugano, near Naples. Descending the pass we entered the extensive plain of Oojan, the Champs de Mars of Persia, where formerly the Persians used to receive instruction in military manœuvres. On the left lay a very rugged range of mountains, called Booz Koosh, or Goat-killer, separating us from the valley of Serab, remarkable for its mineral hot-springs, efficacious, if we are to confide in local belief, in curing all the ailments of humanity. Overhanging this valley is a famous mountain, called Savalandāgh, reputed to be one of the highest mountains in Persia. In the earlier part of his career in this country my husband was quartered in this valley (C.), and from him I learned the following particulars concerning the above mountain. Its slopes on the northern side are frequented in spring and summer by the large wandering Toork tribe

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of Shaheesevens (Shah's friends). In winter they pitch their tents in the flat, sultry, but luxuriant plains of Moghan, now belonging to Russia. This district is reputed to have been traversed by Pompey, whose army was so infested by snakes as to be forced to move their camp from these prairies. It is reported by the Persians that at the present day these plains are filled during summer with snakes, scorpions, and other reptiles, which, added to the noxious climate at that season, render them uninhabitable.

Savalan Dagh, or mountain, is remarkable for containing at its summit the remains of a Mussulman pyghamber, or prophet, which lie in a small grotto exposed to the view of pilgrims. As the top of Savalān is above the line of perpetual congelation, his saintship has been miraculously preserved whole and entire, face, features, and beard, to the admiring gaze of his devotees. On my husband's asking a moolla how and when the pyghamber had reached his elevated sepulchre, he replied that tradition had preserved no record on the former point, but that it was known he was a prophet subsequent to the "Lord Mahommed." It was retorted that the moolla was talking koofr, infidelity—it being a precept of the Mussulmans that Mahommed was the completion of all the prophets, and that none could succeed him. "That is true," said the moolla, in some confusion that his divinity should undergo correction from a Feringhee.

On the fourth day we reached Toorkomanchaee, a village showing every sign of prosperity, owing to its good fortune in having constantly become the property of each successive holder of the grand-vezeership, and being thereby saved from the encroachments of troops marching

to and from the capital, to which the other villages on the high road are subject, and also exempt from the exactions of travellers with orders of seeoorsāt, meaning an allowance of provisions and fodder. This is one of the most harassing, and probably one of the most ancient abuses to which Persians are subject. A man of rank travelling, or a governor proceeding to his post, receives an order entitling his numerous retinue to be supplied with provisions of all kinds, for which not a fraction is paid. Double the quantity required is demanded, as well as a variety of articles which the unfortunate villagers never heard of, and which, to use their own phrase, "their grandfathers never saw in a dream"—such as saffron, tea, cloves, cinnamon, &c. A compromise in money is generally made, and his excellency departs satisfied. It used to be the practice to grant seeoorsāt to all foreign missions proceeding to the Court; but the hardship it entailed on the villagers, and the odium and bitter feelings it excited, were so obvious, that the practice has ceased as far as the English mission is concerned.

At Toorkomanchaee we lived in a house outside the village, which brought to mind associations of a mournful character. Here it was that Persia was crushed by Russia. In this house, built expressly for the accommodation of the Russian representative, was signed the treaty which, twenty-eight years ago, concluded the last war between Russia and Persia. (D.)

The house consisted of two small rooms opposite to each other, in one of which I was told resided the Russian plenipotentiary, and in the other his Persian colleague. The latter was occupied by our two women servants, and

was constructed with such attention to comfort that the sky was visible up the chimney.

We had made preparation for a long march, as it was called, next day; but during the night so violent a storm of snow arose, accompanied by a boorān, that movement was impracticable. A boorān in the north of Persia is a terrible thing. It is a heavy fall of snow, with a violent wind, causing a drift which blinds the traveller, and effectually conceals the road. Many lives are lost each winter in this way. I have heard of several instances where the benumbed and wayworn traveller was saved only by the barking of a dog, the bleating of a sheep, or the tinkling of a mule bell, when he was on the point of yielding to his fate, not knowing he was within reach of aid.

It must be a fearful thing to be caught in a desolate plain or mountain side by one of these awful storms, no place of refuge near, the thermometer at 10° or 20° below zero, and the howling blast piercing to the vitals. I have often thought with pity and surprise of the Persian couriers of the mission, and their wonderful journeys to Erzeroom. One of them presents himself in the month of January, muffled in sheepskin coat and cap, receives his bags, and goes forth alone on his terrible journey of nearly 800 miles; and after a rest of perhaps two days at Erzeroom, returns again, worn out by fatigue and want of sleep, nearly blind, and "burnt by the snow," as the expressive phrase is in Persian. Woe betide him if he cannot show good reasons for having been more than ten days in performing the trip each way. As the post-horses are miserable, this can only be done by being almost constantly on horseback, and by sleeping in this position,

which I am told that even English travellers by chaperee, as it is called, soon acquire the habit of doing. Some of these mission couriers make extraordinary journeys. One of them, named Malik Mahommed Beg, used frequently to perform the 800 miles in seven days. It is only by being exceedingly weather-wise, and knowing the symptoms of an approaching boorān, that these men are able to escape the dangers of a winter journey. With all this risk their pay is small, not exceeding 40*l.* a-year. There are, however, a few illicit gains, which a Persian loves so dearly, in the shape of traffic in small portable objects between Persia and Turkey. In Persia very hard riding is universal. Sir John M'Neill, I have heard, once rode from Tehran to Ispahan, 260 miles, in three days, on the same horse, a pony which cost 10*l.* On another occasion he rode 400 miles, from Tehran to Tabreez, in four days, on post-horses. But an English sergeant surpassed her Majesty's Minister; having performed the same distance in less than three days.

To return to my itinerary. The succeeding morning brought us a genuine Persian winter day, cold, cloudless, bright, but the quantity of snow seemed to preclude all hope of moving the carriage. The mehmandar, however, swore all the oaths ever on the lips of a Persian, that move we should, and move we did. A Persian is perpetually swearing, either by the Almighty or the Prophet, or Ali or Hoossein, or his beard, or his or your life or death. The women are as profane and emphatic in their discourse as the other sex. A favourite and amusing mode of asseveration among the syeds, especially in testifying to an untruth, is "Beh ser e jeddam" (by the head

of my grandfather), meaning Mahommed; indeed it is a common adage that the greatest swearers are the greatest liars. On the present occasion, luckily for us, our mehmandar reversed this popular saying; and it was amusing to see the struggles of himself and his attendants to get us through the deep snow. He sprang off his horse, and insisted on yoking him to the carriage, and the good steed, so docile are the Persian horses, immediately began to pull with the utmost goodwill, though in the course of his existence he had never before seen such a machine. The cold was intense; the long beards and moustaches of the Persians were frozen, and looked as white as the snow. Long after dark we reached the village of Khoosh Boolak, where we were glad to warm and rest ourselves after an anxious, toilsome day. Two days later we reached Meeana, famous, or infamous, for its bugs—a bite from one of which kills with the slow lingering death, such as husbands and wives in England love mutually to impart. We spent half the night in precautions against a danger, which many attribute to fever, indigenous to this unwholesome place. That morning we crossed the high pass of Kaplan Kooh, the Leopard's Mountain, from the summit of which we had a far-reaching view of the provinces of Azerbijan and Irak, of which the Leopard is the boundary. The narrowness of the road over the pass raised some doubt if the carriage could be got across without being taken off the wheels, so I took refuge in my takhterewan. Near the top, on looking down the precipice over which I hung, I saw the remains of dead horses who had slipped into the abyss; this was so discouraging, that I kept my eyes shut until we reached a kind of shelter at the summit.

Two days more brought us to the town of Zenjān, of which I remember nothing remarkable, excepting the prodigious size of its onions, far exceeding anything produced in Spain or Portugal. But all Persian towns are alike; all built of unburnt, unpainted brick, all windowless, and all in a state of decay. The only difference among them is, that one has a fine old mosque, which another has not.

Nov. 12th.—Our road to-day was enlivened by a large party of Shaheesevens, with their families, their flocks and their herds, and all their worldly goods, migrating from I know not where, to the plains of Moghan, north of Ardebil, before alluded to; where a temperate climate and luxuriant pastures invited these dwellers in tents to pass the winter. There were camels, horses, asses, sheep, cattle, cats, dogs, men, women, and children. The camels numbered at least one hundred, and carried the heavy baggage, consisting of the tents and cooking utensils. The greater part of the men were mounted either on horseback or on camels; but many of the women were on foot, attended by their large shaggy dogs, the faithful guardians of the camp at night. According to the general custom of the eelyat women, their faces were uncovered, and they looked with a careless indifference, equal to that of Europeans, at our cavalcade. The only individuals who seemed to think that our party formed an unusual sight, were the donkeys, who invariably stopped and turned round to gaze after the strangers and their novel equipage, showing how much calumniated are their intellect and sagacity. Few, very few among the women, even the most youthful, had any claim to beauty; exposure and

severe labour having wholly effaced the delicacy of features which nature intended to be comely. The middle-aged women were exceedingly ugly, and those of advanced years hideous. The Shaheesevens are wealthy, and they exhibited eelyat life under a favourable aspect; but among less fortunate tribes it is far otherwise.

In England our associations with wanderers in tents are full of romance and ideality; we dream of pastoral life, flocks and herds, and amiable shepherds—Abraham and Isaac waiting for angels' visits—Esau, Rebecca, and Ruth. The reality is very different. In the mountains near Tehran I often passed close to small eelyat encampments, and I saw enough to cure me of any fancies and dreams I may have formerly cherished. Squalor and dirt were the general characteristics of the inmates of these oolooses, or camps. The women were in rags, haggard and careworn; the children emaciated from want of nourishment. Among the wealthy tribes, and among the Koords and Toorkomans, no doubt it is often otherwise. The tent life, with its freedom and independence, must have its charms: but in Persia the wealthy tribes are the exception. The Toork wandering tribes are often rich; but those of real Persian descent, the Loors, Bekhtiarees, Mafees, and Nana Kellees, are extremely poor.

After leaving Zenjān, we entered the high and extensive plain of Sultaneeya, famous for its pastures, and consequently most attractive to the eelyats (tribes) with which it is crowded in spring. The cold here in winter is described to be intense. The village of Sultanceya, at which we passed the night, was once a great capital, founded, or at all events embellished, by Iljaëtoo Khan,

a descendant of Chengeez, who ruled Persia about A.D. 1300. A splendid mosque, said to be that monarch's mausoleum, with a wonderful dome supposed to be nearly 150 feet in height, and 50 or 60 feet in diameter, is the only edifice left to attest the greatness of Sultaneeya. This city is reported to have been ruined by the sudden disappearance of water, caused doubtless by an earthquake, which forced the inhabitants to migrate. In evidence of the grandeur of Sultaneeya, I forget how many hundred or thousand Kajāvas, the Persians declare, left the city in one day.

We were now sensibly descending from the high elevation of Azerbijan. The air was becoming mild and warm as we approached the city of Kasveen, on the 16th of November. This town presents the remains of ancient, worn-out greatness; and one sees there, as elsewhere in Persia, considerable tracts with scanty population; extensive bazars without goods or traffickers; fine mosques and palaces in ruin or decay. This at one time was one of the many capitals of Persia. Each dynasty, as it succeeded to the kingdom, seems to have selected a special town as its residence. After seeing Tehran, which has not a single point to recommend it, I frequently regretted that Kasveen had not been approved of by the Kajārs as their capital. It is situated at the foot of the mountains leading to Geelān and the Caspian, and at the extremity of a fine plain that wants only water and population to make it a garden of fertility. It is the land of grapes, which in profusion, variety, and flavour, are unsurpassed.

Persia may be said to have neither rivers nor streams; rain also being scanty, it was necessary to invent some means of irrigation. This has been done with great in-

genuity. The vast plain of Kasveen has been intersected in all directions with *kanāts*, extending miles upon miles. A kanāt may be called a subterranean aqueduct, and is a succession of wells, beginning in the mountains, and conducted the required distance into the plains, sometimes for thirty or forty miles. To say the truth, I have never been able thoroughly to understand the system, but I will write down all I have heard about it. A shaft or well is sunk on the skirt of a mountain until a spring is reached. A subterranean channel, often from thirty to forty feet beneath the surface, is dug in the direction of the plain, into which the water of the spring, with that of as many other springs as possible, is collected. At fifteen or twenty yards distance another shaft is sunk, and thus the channel and shafts are continued to the desired point by a system of levelling which, if not conducted on scientific principles, is said to be practically correct. The use of the shafts is to clear out the channel from time to time. The expense of this method of cultivation, and the value of water in the Shah's dominions, may be conceived. Yet all Persia is covered with the remains of kanāts, which war and bad government have brought to decay.

Happily for the dry climate of Persia, the construction of kanāts has been made one of the passports to paradise for pious Mussulmans. Nothing is more meritorious than to conduct a stream of water into a town, where, in summer, the poorer part of the population suffers great distress from drought. A Persian who has spent his life in peculation, or in amassing wealth by interest at 100 per cent., or even 200 at times, when his days are closing, resolves to win heaven and a good reputation by relieving

the thirst of his fellow-citizens in the above way. To make as sure as he can of his kanāt, and save it from embezzlement, he calls the church to his aid, and puts it under the protection of some holy moolla, by declaring it waqf; that is, it becomes an offering to God, and cannot be sold or "eaten"—at least it ought not to be eaten; but all his precautions are often useless in saving his kanāt from this gastronomic process. Do what he will, he cannot prevent his patent for paradise from becoming the cause of various broken heads. The droughty denizens fight bitterly for its possession.

At Kasveen we lodged in the house of a wealthy merchant. In any other country this man would have been spurned as a swindler; here he holds a high position in the mercantile world and at court. A Georgian youth, captured at the sack of Tiflis sixty years ago, had risen to the highest appointments in Persia, and had amassed great wealth, which, as a slave belonging to the king, should, at his death, have been inherited by the Shah. He, wishing to bequeath it to his relations, secretly deposited with this merchant a large sum of money. At his death, this person presented himself to the Prime Minister, and, with protestations of loyalty and devotion, announced that 30,000 tomans (about 15,000*l.*) were in his hands, which he would immediately pay to the Shah. It was not doubted that this was a plan to retain for himself another 30,000 tomans.

Continuing our journey to the East through the plain of Kasveen, which at other seasons is covered with the tents of eelyats, on our left hand lay the range of Elboorz. These mountains concealed from our view a

remarkable place, no less than Alamoot, the castle of Hassan Sabāh, the redoubted chief of the Assassins, popularly called the Old Man of the Mountain, from his Arabic designation of Sheikh el Jebbal, who, about the year 1060, founded a religion which appears to have borne some resemblance to modern Babeeism. To the novices, a creed not very different from Mahommedanism, of which the forms were strictly preserved, was inculcated; while to the initiated was made known the real doctrine, that all is nought, illusion, emptiness.

Hassan lived to the age of ninety, and died peaceably in his bed, which he had allowed very few of his enemies to do. After capturing Alamoot, for thirty-five years he never left that fortress, and twice only did he move from the chamber whence issued his mandates of death. He executed two of his sons — one for the insignificant offence of drinking wine. One of his first victims, when he began his career of murder, was Nassr-ood-deen, the famous vezeer of Alp Arselan and Malek Shah, the two great monarchs of the Seljookee race. Hassan Sabāh was born at Rei, near Tehran, and studied at Nishaboor, where one of his college companions was Nassr-ood-deen. They made a compact that the first to attain greatness should befriend the other. After a long course of years, Nassr-ood-deen became Grand Vezeer. Hassan proceeded to court, and upbraided him with his breach of promise. The other acknowledged his friend's claim, and in a short time his great talents raised him to high favour with Malek Shah; when, according to the usage of Persians, he tried every art to subvert his patron. The king having demanded an account of the revenue of his empire,

Nassr-ood-deen required more than a year to prepare it. Hassan Sebāh immediately offered to furnish the account in forty days. He kept his promise; but at the critical moment of examination several sheets were found wanting, and he was dismissed in disgrace. He then wandered to Egypt, where he first imbibed his doctrines. Nassr-ood-deen is supposed to have abstracted the missing sheets, in order to bring disgrace on his ungrateful rival. For nearly two centuries Hassan and his descendants maintained their independence and rule in their mountain fortress, seizing other castles of the same description in the hill ranges of Persia and Palestine, and spreading their doctrine and their supremacy by the daggers of his Fedwees, or disciples, which they wielded without remorse. Von Hammer describes these sectaries, and they are familiar to most readers in 'The Crusaders.' Sultan Sanjar, one of the Seljookee monarchs, led an army towards Alamoot to exterminate this band of Assassins. Awaking one morning, he found a dagger plunged to the hilt in the earth by his bedside, with a scroll on it telling him to beware, else next time the dagger would be sheathed in his breast. Sultan Sanjar then retired. Hoolakoo Khan was made of sterner stuff. About A.D. 1250 he captured Alamoot, and slew thousands of the Assassins, or Ismaëlees, as they are otherwise called. Their former appellation is supposed to be derived either from the name of their founder Hassan, or from the word hashish, said to be a preparation from hemp, of highly intoxicating power, which was drunk by the Fedwees previously to the execution of the orders of their chief, to slay. The "Lords of Wrath," or Meerghazabs of the

Shahs as the executioners about the Shah's person are called, are said to use chers, or bang, a preparation of the same description, in the performance of their vocation of extracting eyes, strangling, and cutting throats.

Several years ago my husband paid a visit to Alamoot, which proved to be a high solitary rock, in the midst of a valley surrounded by lofty mountains. With great difficulty and some danger he and his companions ascended to the top, where they found only a few insignificant buildings, and some cisterns for containing water. One side of the rock down to the valley beneath, was smooth and abrupt. It was hence doubtless the Fedwees used to precipitate themselves to evince their obedience to the mandates of the Sheikh of the Mountain. The stay of the party at the top was short, so nervously eager were they to face and get over the danger of the return descent. Passing one very bad spot several yards in length, the heart of one of the party somewhat failed him, so he bestrided the shoulders of a mountaineer; but, when half way, he found himself overhanging a precipice of several hundred feet, with a path of a few inches wide, and the hill man tottering beneath him.

Proceeding through the level and cheerful plain of Kasveen, we arrived in a few days at Suleimāneeya, which afforded us a prospect of the speedy termination of our long journey. Latterly it had been constantly enlivened by arrivals from Tehran of friends and acquaintances, expectants of countenance; and numbers of strangers, whose affairs at court under the new reign were in a languishing condition, and who sought to prop them up by propitiating the new comer. Lambs, fruits, and sugarcandy,

the usual offerings on such occasions, flowed in to superfluity, to the great delight of the array of Persian servants by whom we were surrounded, though certainly not served. Suleimānceya is an extensive palace or hunting-seat, built by the present king's great-grandfather, Fetteh Ali Shah. It contains courts and apartments innumerable for lodging the ample haram of that monarch, who seems to have made Solomon his prototype. The number of the inmates of the anderoon belonging to this sovereign is estimated at several hundred. His Majesty's sons were reckoned at upwards of eighty, but his daughters were too numerous to admit of calculation; though why the ladies should exceed in such proportion the gentlemen of the family was never explained. It is an idea among Persians that women are considerably more numerous than men; and this delusion they all allege as a proof that Providence intended wives should be in excess to husbands. His Majesty's sons followed his example, with the result of many among them having forty or fifty children; and the total of his descendants is estimated at some thousand persons. Some among them are consequently in a deplorable state of poverty. I have heard of one prince, a son or grandson of Fetteh Ali Shah, who used to go himself to the bazaar to buy bread for his family; and I know of more than one who begged a member of the mission to give them two or three sovereigns to relieve them from actual want. The princesses are many of them greatly to be commiserated. They have been forced by destitution to marry persons of very inferior condition; and one lady in particular had taken for her husband a

man who had been a cobbler, but who had raised himself above that station.

In this palace there was one room of considerable size, which served as the hall of audience of Fetteh Ali Shah. It was decorated in the usual style of Persian taste —abundance of gilding, varnish of all colours. Looking-glasses covered the walls and ceiling; fresco paintings of damsels of Europe and Persia were interspersed, all scantily attired, but particularly the former, who were invariably represented as if in the fullest, or rather the scantiest, dress, as for a ball. In Persia, the painting of a lady intended to be European is easily distinguishable by her companion, a little dog, under her arm. At one end of the apartment was a large fresco painting, full size, of Fetteh Ali Shah, in regal array, with a numerous party of his sons standing around him. The Kajjars are an eminently handsome race—at least the royal family are so—and not the less from the style of features being Israelitish. They are almost to be recognised in the streets by their large open black eyes, aquiline noses, and well-chiselled mouth. At the other extremity of the room was another painting of still greater attraction. It represented Agha Mahommed Khan, the founder of the Kajjar dynasty, surrounded by the chiefs of his tribe who helped him to the sovereignty of Persia. Excepting Agha Mahommed himself, they are all clad in mail, and all seated on chairs, which seems to be an error in dramatic propriety of the painter; for though the ancient Persians are supposed to have made use of chairs, the ground is preferred by the modern race. "Oh, I am

so tired; do, pray, let me sit on the ground to rest myself,"—a Persian visitor often says to his English friend, after sitting on a chair for an hour. The likenesses of the chiefs are said to be excellent, and that of Agha Mahommed Khan himself inimitable. The former are fine, sturdy, determined-looking warriors. Agha Mahommed looks like a fiend. The atrocious, cold, calculating ferocity which marked the man is stamped on his countenance. He waded through blood to the throne, and at length his cruelty cost him his life. One evening, for some trifling fault, he threatened two of his menial servants with death in the morning. As he ever kept his word in a matter of this kind, these domestics murdered him during the night at Sheesha, in Karabagh, in 1797, and his nephew Fetteh Ali Shah ascended the throne.

It is related that once having ordered many hundred eyes to be levied from a town which had fallen under his vengeance, they were brought to him in a platter. The savage monarch drew his dagger, and counted the eyes with the point. Having finished his diabolical arithmetic, he turned to his minister, and said, "Wallāhee! if one had been wanting I would have made up the number with your own eyes."

Agha Mahommed Khan was a man of inflexible resolution. On one occasion he was surprised at night by his competitor for the throne Lootf Ali Khan Zend, a youth of incomparable courage, whom Agha Mahommed afterwards cruelly put to death. The entire camp fled, and left their chief to his fate, with only a few guards. He, however, with wonderful resolution, remained in his tent, which the enemy, in order that it might be preserved

from pillage, did not enter. In the morning, at the first streak of dawn, the Kajjar chief's muezzin proclaimed, in his loudest tone, "Allāh ho Akbar! Allāh ho Akbar!" Lootf Ali Khan and his troops were seized with astonishment, and at once believed that Agha Mahommed Khan, who they thought had fled, was returned with all his forces. They took to flight forthwith, and a new dynasty was established.

Though cruel and bloodthirsty,* it was chiefly by the higher classes that his fierce temper was felt. To the people at large he was just and kind, and his dominions were so secure from robbers and marauders that, in Persian phrase, the wolf and the lamb might drink at the same fountain. A horseman once stopped a peasant driving an ass loaded with melons, and helped himself to one. "You rascal! you dog! is there no justice in Iran? Is Agha Mahommed Khan dead?" screamed the peasant, making a blow at the thief. The pleased horseman retired, smiling: it was Agha Mahommed Khan himself. I have perhaps tarried too long with Agha Mahommed Khan; but as all this happened only sixty-five years ago, and may happen again, his history and his picture made a deep impression upon me.

The next day brought us to a village within four miles of Tehran. Here the urgent request of the Prime Minister induced a stay of three days, much to my discom-

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* He sacked Tiflis with unbounded cruelty, and carried off thousands of women and children. At Kerman, which had given refuge to his rival Lootf Ali Khan, he is said to have extracted 70,000 pairs of eyes, and killed an equal number of human beings; but this is incredible.

fort. His Excellency had been consulting the astrologers, who, on referring to the stars, had ascertained that for two days there would not be a "saëte neek," a good hour, for a solemn entry to the capital. As the Ameer e Nirzam, or Prime Minister, was anxious on the subject, and as Colonel Sheil knew that if hereafter anything went wrong it would be attributed to the bad hour, he agreed to gratify the Grand Vezeer. Many Persians pretend to laugh at astrologers, yet there is scarcely one among them who undertakes a business of importance without ascertaining if the "hour is good," or taking a fāl to help his judgment. Like the captain of a man of war, many among them "make" the hour good by repeating their experiments until fate is forced to be propitious. What astrologers mean by a good and bad hour is, I think, the fact of a malignant star—like Mars in a love matter, for instance—being in the ascendant or otherwise. Taking a fāl means opening at random the Koran; Hafiz; Saadee, the Sheikh, as he is familiarly called, counting a certain number of lines down the page,—and then futurity is revealed.

Early in the morning of the appointed day, I was, in company with Crab (who was considered as much out of place as myself), deposited in my large box, the takhte-rewan, the curtains of which were carefully closed, and despatched forthwith to Tehran before the turmoil; having, in my capacity of woman, no concern with the solemnities about to follow. On entering the capital of the Great King, the King of Kings, the Shahinshah, I was startled to see a repetition of Tabreez, and something worse, particularly in passing through the quarter

of the hostage Toorkomans. The women showed themselves in crowds, and with complete disregard of Persian ideas. I was greatly amused at the manœuvres of my escort extraordinary. They were constantly vociferating to the male passengers to depart, lest I should be profaned by being seen. When a stray passenger happened to neglect their hints and advance boldly towards the takht, he was immediately seized, and placed with his face close to the wall until I had passed. On reaching the mission I was charmed at the contrast presented with the streets. I passed through a pretty English garden, and then entered an excellent and even stately-looking English, or rather Italian, dwelling of considerable size. I was still more surprised when an extremely well-dressed Persian entered the room, and said to me, in an accent savouring most intensely of the "Cowgate," "Wi' ye tak ony breakfast?" This was Ali Mahommed Beg, the mission housekeeper, who had acquired a fair knowledge of English from a Scotch woman-servant. Some hours after, my husband arrived, hot and dusty. The official entry surpassed in brilliancy even the istikbāl of Tabreez: the same crowd, rush and crush; the same coffee, tea, and kalleeons; the meerzas, the merchants, the beggars, the lootees. One of the latter particularly distinguished himself: he put an ass on his shoulders, and strutted along in front of the Elchee. The Persians adopted a whimsical method of carrying out the rules of istikbal, "according to treaty." The village we were residing in was three miles distant from Tehran, and etiquette requires the ceremony to commence four miles from the

city. The point was knotty, but a Persian is a man of resource. A tent was pitched at the requisite distance; and my husband was accordingly obliged to return a mile towards Tabreez, to receive the congratulations of the Shah's representative. Then followed the long, dusty, hot ride to town; for though it was now the 27th of November, the weather formed a strong contrast with the temperature of Azerbijan. We were in lat. 36°, and elevated above the sea not much more than three thousand feet.

We had now concluded our long journey of more than three months and a half. I was rejoiced at its termination; for though mixed with many pleasurable associations, many new ideas acquired, many wrong notions dissipated; I was tired of the constraint and the unceasing hurry from object to object. I was glad to rest, and to be able to see the dawn and daylight appear with indifference. I felt inclined to do as an Indian officer I heard once did. After he left the army, he paid a man to blow a bugle every morning at daybreak, that he might have the satisfaction of feeling he need not get up.

CHAPTER VIII.

Dulness of the life in Tehran — Gardening — The Persian language — The Moharrem — Dramatic representation — Fighting among the women — Extraordinary overflow of grief at the representation — Visit to the Shah's mother and wives — Interior of the Haram — Thin costume.

December 2nd, 1849.—HERE then we were fairly launched on the monotonous current of life in Persia. To a man the existence is tiresome enough, but to a woman it is still more dreary. The former has the resource of his occupation, the sports of the field, the gossip and scandal of the town, in which he must join whether he likes it or not; and, finally, Persian visiting cannot be altogether neglected, and, if freely entered into, is alone a lavish consumer of time. With a woman it is otherwise. She cannot move abroad without being thickly veiled; she cannot amuse herself by shopping in the bazars, owing to the attention she would attract unless attired in Persian garments. This is precluded by the inconvenience of the little shoes hardly covering half the foot, with a small heel three inches high in the middle of the sole, to say nothing of the roobend or small white linen veil, fitting tightly round the head (over the large blue veil which envelopes the whole person), and hanging over the face, with an open worked aperture for the eyes and for breathing; then the chakh-choor, half-boot half-trousers, into which gown and petticoat are crammed.

As to visiting, intimacy with Persian female society has seldom any attraction for a European, indeed I regret to say there were only a few of the Tehran ladies whose mere acquaintance was considered to be desirable; so that the fine garden of the Mission, which hitherto had been much neglected, was the only resource left to me. The Shah had then in his service a first-rate English gardener, Mr. Burton, and with his help I astonished every one with the fineness of my celery, cauliflowers, &c., for these useful edibles occupied my mind more than flowers. Gardening in Persia is not an easy matter to bring to perfection. First there is the difficulty of making the gardeners do as they are told, and then twice every week the garden is flooded and the beds drowned. When the spring comes on and the sun gets strong and fierce, the beds dry up soon, and look like baked earth, cracked and dry, until the next water day, when they are changed into mud. The ground is covered with snow during January and February, so that March and April in spring, and October, November, and December in the autumn and beginning of winter, are the only months fit for the cultivation of a garden. The power of the sun in summer is so intense, that flowers blow and wither in a day. Roses come in about the 24th of April, and are out of season in Tehran by the middle of May. During that time they are in wonderful profusion, and are cultivated in fields as an object of trade to make rosewater; they are an inferior kind of cabbage rose. Persians are also fond of cultivating tuberoses, narcissus, and tulips in water; still all their flowers are much inferior to ours; but while they last are superabundant. I got over some fine hyacinths one year, and

they attracted great admiration. Nearly all our garden flowers grow wild in Persia, but are small, and always single.

The distance at which the Russian mission resided prevented me from cultivating as much as I wished, the acquaintance of Princess D—— and her amiable daughter; and the remaining European female society of Tehran was limited to one or two ladies, the wives of foreign officers in the Shah's service. To my countrywomen, therefore, whose pleasures are derived from the excitements of a London or Paris season, I need not offer counsel to eschew a land where life for them much resembles that of a convent. Once a month the post from Europe arrived, and that was a bright, joyful day. The 10th of each month the mail was "due," and every one anxiously expecting it, but alas! we often experienced the truth of the saying, "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick," for we were often forgotten in Constantinople.

There was ample time consequently for the study of Persian, and I soon acquired sufficient to enable me to go through my part unaided in the society of the few Persian ladies with whom I was on visiting terms. Fortunately Persian, up to a certain extent, is an exceedingly easy language, more so even than Italian. In the pronunciation there is no difficulty, and, for my limited topics of conversation the idiom was not so remote from that of the languages of Europe as to make its acquisition a painful study. But that there is no good unmixed with evil is true of Persian as of all other things. There is no such thing as "reading made easy." The character is abominable and almost invincible. Enough to say, that

there are neither capitals nor pauses of any kind, nor divisions of sentences, paragraphs, chapters, books, or volumes. English itself would be an enigma under such perplexities. One of my modes of study was to listen to the Persian meerzas, or secretaries, reading letters, but I never saw an instance of their reading an epistle at once without hesitation, and still less of their understanding it at the first perusal.

The month of December chanced this year to be one of woe and wailing externally, but really of relaxation and amusement to all classes of Persians. It was the month of Moharrem, which among Sheahs is solemnized in commemoration of the slaughter of Imām Hoossein and his family in the desert of Kerbella. The story is affecting. The Persians have converted it into a theatrical representation, somewhat resembling the Mysteries produced on the stage in old times in England and elsewhere. Hoossein, the son of Fatma, daughter of Mahommed, is marching through the desert with his wives and family of young children and attendants, chiefly his near relations, numbering seventy persons. They are attacked by the troops of Yezeed, commanded by his general Obeid Oollah, the monarch of Damascus, and the second sovereign of the Beneè Ommeya dynasty. Hoossein defends himself valiantly during several days; till at length he is cut off from the Euphrates, and his family perish, some from thirst, some fighting. Hoossein is finally killed and his head is cut off by Shimr. It requires to be seen to conceive the emotion of the Persians at this performance. On every side, and from all ranks, sighs, groans, and weeping, without restraint, are heard, mixed with impre-

cations against the perpetrators of the cruelties suffered by the prophet's grandson and his family. Excitement is occasionally carried to such a pitch that Shimr, the object of general execration, has difficulty in making his escape from the oriental Judge Lynch, and particularly from the indignation and buffets of the women. The representation lasts ten days, and several hours each day. I confess with some shame, that my patience and curiosity were insufficient to carry me through a complete performance of the entire drama; nevertheless I have been to several representations. One of the principal personages on one of the ten days is the Elchee Fering, some fictitious European ambassador, probably Greek, who is present when the head of Hoossein is exhibited to Yezeed, and who loudly protests against the massacre; for which indiscretion he is rewarded with the crown of martyrdom. There is always great anxiety that the costume of his Excellency should be European and military, and, above all, a cocked hat and feather are highly prized. At Serab, some years ago, a deputation once waited on my husband to borrow his coat and cap for the Elchee Fering, now generally called with immense contempt of chronology, Elchee Inglees. At Tehran our horses and chairs too, are in constant requisition during the month of Moharrem, at the private performances in the city—the former to appear in the pageant, the latter to accommodate the European visitors.

The Prime Minister had constructed an immense building, holding several thousand persons, for these representations. It fulfilled all the purposes of a theatre, though after a design somewhat novel. The stage, in-

stead of being at the bottom of the building, was formed of a large elevated platform in the middle of the pit, if I may so call it, perfectly open on every side, and revealing, to the entire destruction of all exercise of the imagination, the mysteries which ought to pass behind the curtain. Two tiers of boxes surround the platform. The foreign ministers receive a formal invitation to attend the Tazeeya, as these performances are called, of the Prime Minister, to refuse which would be resented as highly discourteous. I too was included in the invitation. On reaching the building, I was conducted to a very comfortable *loge*, with an antechamber, or kefshken, "slipper-casting" room, where one leaves the outer shoes. The front of the box was carefully covered over with a thick felt carpet, pierced with small holes, which, while they allowed us to see all that passed, completely excluded us from the view of the audience. The Shah's box was at the top, facing the performers; on his right were the boxes of his uncles, the prime minister, the English minister as senior, the Russian minister, &c. On his left were the boxes of his mother, who has no other title than that of Mãder e Shah, the king's mother, and his wives; then that of the prime minister's wife, then mine, and next the Russian minister's wife. The fatigues of the day were relieved by constant supplies of tea and coffee, with pipes incessantly for those who liked them. The "house" was completely filled, and there must have been several thousand persons present. Part of the pit was appropriated to women of humble condition, who were in great numbers, all however carefully veiled, and all seated on the bare ground. Before the "curtain drew up," it was

ludicrous to witness the contention among these dames for places, which was not always limited to cries and execrations. They often proceeded to blows, striking each other heartily on the head with the iron heel of their slippers, dexterously snatched off the foot for the purpose; and, worse still, tearing off each other's veils; several ferashes were present to keep the peace, armed with long sticks, with which they unmercifully belaboured these pugnacious devotees. It would be tedious to describe a drama of ten days' duration. Everything was done to make the scene as real as possible. Hoossein, his family, and attendants, were in the costume of the time. They make their appearance, travelling to Cufa, in the desert of Kerbella. Camels, led horses caparisoned, kejawās, are conducted round the platform; trumpets, kettledrums, resound far and near. Yezeed's army appears, his general makes a speech, Imām Hoossein laments his pathetic fate; he then goes out to fight, and returns, himself and his horse covered with arrows. The scene proceeds; they are cut off from the Euphrates; more lamentations over their impending fate, more fighting. The fierce Shimr and his cavaliers, all in mail, come forward, mounted on their war-horses; Shimr makes speeches in character; Imām Hoossein replies with dignity and with grief for the distress of his family. His young sons Ali Akbar and Ali Asghar go out to fight, and are brought back dead. Sekkeena and Rookheeya, his little daughters, are slain amid the weeping loud and unfeigned of the audience. The angel Gabriel descends from the skies, attended by his ministering angels, all radiant in spangled wings, and deprecates the hard lot of the

prophet's offspring; the King of the Gins, or Genii, with his army, appears, and follows the angelic example. Moses, Jesus Christ, and Mahommed, revisit the earth, and are stricken with the general contagion of grief. At length Shimr does his work, amidst an universal outburst of sorrow and indignation; and the next day, the tenth, the interment of Imām Hoossein and his family takes places at Kerbella.

It is a sight in no small degree curious to witness an assemblage of several thousand persons plunged in deep sorrow, giving vent to their grief in the style of schoolboys and girls. The Persians have a peculiar manner of weeping. Various extraordinary and ludicrous noises accompany their demonstrations, which one is sometimes inclined to mistake for laughter. When one begins the contagion spreads to all. I too felt myself forced, would I or not, to join my tears to those of the Persian women round me, which appeared to give considerable satisfaction to them. The events are indeed affecting, and many of the parts are acted with great spirit and judgment. The delivery is a sort of recitative. Imām Hoossein was composed and dignified. The part of Sekkeena, a girl of twelve, was performed by a little boy with an approbation which he well deserved. Shimr was excellent, fierce and ferocious as a Meerghazab. Young lads represented the wives of Hoossein, in whose favour I can say nothing; their boisterous Arab grief failed to excite my sympathy.

It was strange to see Moses attired as an Arab sheikh, which probably enough was a correct representation of his real costume, though not bearing much likeness to Michael

Angelo's conception of the great lawgiver. Our Saviour was made to appear in garments denoting poverty, though certainly not with any intention of indignity. Two women sat at his side, who, in answer to my inquiry, I was told were his wives. Mahommed made amends by his grandeur, in which silvered silk and Cashmeer shawls were prominent. The Elchee was accompanied by his wife, who had a European bonnet on, with the curtain hanging over the forehead and the front on her neck. During the entire month the women and many of the men dress in black.

Jaṇuary 12*th*.—The season of grief having passed, I now prepared to pay my respects to the Serkar e Mader e Shah, her highness the Shah's mother. Instead of his Majesty's principal wife, as one would anticipate, it is this lady who holds the chief place at court—among the womankind, be it well understood. The royal wives count as nothing, unless under very unusual circumstances, such as occurred in the instance of the Tājood Dowla, in Fetteh Ali Shah's reign, who, from a very humble origin, ascended to her elevated position by force of talent, and, what is more uncommon, of goodness. The Khanum, or Lady, that being the name the Shah applies to his mother, as Napoleon the Great did Madame to his, having fixed the day, a large retinue of servants with a gaudy takhterewān were sent by her to convey me to the palace, which, joined to my own servants, made an inconvenient procession through the narrow bazars. After much shouting and turning of people's faces to the wall, we arrived at a small door. Here our cavalcade stopped, and I alighted from the takhterewān. The men servants



Persian Lady receiving a European Lady. Page 131

were forbidden to advance, and, accompanied by my maid, I was conducted along a damp passage into a fine court with a large tank full of water in the centre; from various apartments round this court women hastened out, curious to see the Khanum e Inglees, the English lady. I passed on, ascended a flight of steps, and reached a nice room hung round with looking-glasses, where a chair had been placed for me. Here I was joined by a Frenchwoman, who, when very young, had married a Persian she met in Paris, and whose faith she has since adopted. She is interpreter to the Shah's mother, and is a very clever, agreeable person. In a few minutes a negress entered the room, and informed us that the Khanum waited, and that I was to "take my brightness into her presence." We were then ushered into the adjoining chamber, and found her seated on a chair at a table which was covered with coarse white unhemmed calico. On each side of her, on a chair likewise, sat a pretty young lady covered with jewels. The Khanum said a great many amiable things to me, and went through all the usual Persian compliments, hoping my heart had not grown narrow, that my nose was fat, &c. &c. She then introduced the two young ladies as the Shah's two principal wives and cousins. Neither of them uttered a word, but sat like statues during my interview, which lasted two hours. The Shah's mother is handsome, and does not look more than thirty, yet her real age must be at least forty. She is very clever, and is supposed to take a large share in the affairs of the government. She has also the whole management of the Shah's anderoon; so that I should think she must have a good deal to occupy her mind, as the Shah has three principal

wives, and eight or nine inferior ones. These ladies have each a separate little establishment, and some a separate court from the rest, but all the courts have a communication with one another. I do not admire the costume of the Persian women. The Shah's mother was dressed with great magnificence. She wore a pair of trousers made of gold brocade. These Persian trousers are always, as I have before remarked, very wide, each leg being, when the means of the wearer allow it, wider than the skirt of a gown, so that they have the effect of an exceedingly ample petticoat; and as crinolines are unknown, the elegantes wear ten and eleven pairs of trousers, one over the other in order to make up for the want of the above important invention. But to return to the Shah's mother: her trousers were edged with a border of pearls embroidered on braid; she had a thin blue crèpe chemisette, also trimmed with pearls; this chemisette hung down a little below the waist, nearly meeting the top of the trousers, which are fastened by a running string. As there was nothing under the thin gauze, the result of course was more display than is usual in Europe. A small jacket of velvet was over the chemisette, reaching to the waist, but not made to close in front, and on the head a small shawl, pinned under the chin. On the shawl were fastened strings of large pearls and diamond sprigs; her arms were covered with handsome bracelets, and her neck with a variety of costly necklaces. Her hair was in bands, and hung down under the shawl in a multitude of small plaits. She wore no shoes, her feet being covered with fine Cashmere stockings. The palms of her hands and tips of her fingers were dyed red,

with a herb called henna, and the edges of the inner part of the eyelids were coloured with antimony. All the Kajars have naturally large arched eyebrows, but, not satisfied with this, the women enlarge them by doubling their real size with great streaks of antimony: her cheeks were well rouged, as is the invariable custom among Persian women of all classes. She asked me many questions about the Queen; how she dressed, how many sons she had, and said she could not imagine a happier person than her Majesty, with her fine family, her devoted husband, and the power she possessed. She made me describe the ceremonial of a drawing-room. I much regretted I had no picture of the Queen to show her. She was also curious to have an account of a theatre. My maid had been taken to another room, where, surrounded by the servants and slaves of the anderoon, she was surfeited with sugarplums, and where her dress excited much curiosity. These attendants had the same costume as the Shah's mother, only English printed calico of bright flowered patterns took the place of brocade and velvet. Some of them had their hair cut short in front, and combed straight down to the eyebrows, with two stiff curls at each cheek, peeping out from under the shawl. Tea, coffee, and pipes were brought in repeatedly, and after some time a nice collation of fruit. Various kinds of sherbets, ices, and cakes were spread on the table, and on the ground. We were surrounded by ladies, who attended as if they had been servants. No one was seated, excepting the Shah's mother, his wives, and myself. Some of the former were wives of the late Shah and his predecessor, Fetteh Ali Shah. None of them were young,

excepting one, who was very handsome as well as youthful. Her name was Miriam Khânum, wife of a brother of the Shah's mother. She was much flattered at my telling her she was like a European. The women in Persia have only one name, sometimes a fanciful one; such as Beebee Asr, "the Lady of the Era;" Mehrban Khānum, "the Lady of Courtesy;" Sheereen Khanum, "Lady of Sweetness," &c. &c. At length I departed, and regained my takhterewan, highly pleased with the novelty of the scene. When I had acquired a sufficient knowledge of their language to be able to form an opinion, I found the few Persian women I was acquainted with in general lively and clever; they are restless and intriguing, and may be said to manage their husband's and son's affairs. Persian men are made to yield to their wishes by force of incessant talking and teazing.

CHAPTER IX.

Gebr fire-worshippers — Curious mode of interment — Mission garden taken possession of by the Persian ladies — Persian music — Musical masons — The anniversary of Omar's assassination — How celebrated — Difference between Turks and Persians — Persian tolerance — Debts — Marriage — Condition of Persian women.

February 1st.—THE large garden attached to the mission, in which we perform our daily perambulations, was on the opposite side of the road or street; yet even for this short distance we were forced to submit to the tiresome etiquette of being attended by numerous servants. I never went out to drive with less than fifteen or twenty horsemen armed to the teeth; not that there was the remotest shadow of danger, for no country is safer than Persia, but that dignity so required. Yet this troublesome grandeur was trifling to the cavalcade of a Persian lady or gentleman of rank. Our garden was but a melancholy place of recreation: lugubrious rows of cypress, the emblem of the graveyard in the East, crossed each other at right angles; and, to complete the picture, the deserted, neglected, little tombs of some of the children of former Ministers occupied a prominent space, and filled one sometimes with gloomy forebodings. The gardeners of this spot, which, in spite of the above disadvantages, was invaluable to me; by an old custom of the Mission, were always Gebrs of the ancient fire-worshipping native race. These people are most industrious, and

struggle hard under oppression and bigotry, to gain a subsistence. They dwell chiefly in the eastern province of Yezd, from whence they migrate annually in great numbers during spring, something like the Irish reapers and mowers of old; and before winter they assemble in the Mission garden, and with their humble gains return in a body to their own province. In Tehran their abode is the Mission garden, where I have sometimes seen two hundred of this primitive people collected under the trees, where they live. The garden is recognised as their sanctuary and place of refuge, where no hand of violence molests them. They preserve a connexion with their brethren the Parsees of Bombay, and it is on this account, in all likelihood, that their intercourse with us is so intimate. In these improving days of Persia this protection is less necessary than formerly; particularly as the present Prime Minister is a man of much humanity, and willing to befriend this hapless community, who, in their own province, suffer great hardships from the rapacity of governors, and the bigotry of moollas. They are a simple, uneducated class, more rustic and uncouth in their appearance and manners than Mahommedan Persians of the same condition. Little or no information could be gained from them regarding their religion and customs. They said there was one great God that ruled everything, and that he had created numerous other gods or angels, who superintend the affairs of the world; there was a futurity of rewards and punishments; and besides the God of Goodness there is another spirit who is the cause of sin. This of course was Ahriman. They denied emphatically that fire or light was regarded as God; but they affirmed

that they considered it as a most sacred and holy representative of the Divinity and of his power. Compared with other Persians, the Gebrs are described to be a highly virtuous people, though oppression has made them crafty; and my experience of the manner in which my fattest turkeys and best vegetables disappeared, makes me certain that they are not much more honest than the rest of the nation. They marry but one wife, with the natural result of a greater amount of conjugal felicity than prevails among Mahommedan Persians. Within a few miles of Tehran there is a place of interment of the Gebrs. The body is placed at the summit of a hill, exposed to the air and to the birds of prey; when the flesh is thoroughly consumed the bones are thrown into a common pit. Few of their women venture so far as Tehran: those who have appeared were plain in feature and coarse in expression; so, too, were the men, wholly unlike the men of the true Persian tribes, although, I suppose, both the Gebrs and these tribes are of the same race.

This garden was appropriated to other purposes. The 13th of the month Seffer is, from some reason which I have omitted to record, very ominous, particularly to any one who ventures to pass the day in a house. The whole town is consequently on foot, either in excursions or in sauntering about the few gardens in the dreary neighbourhood of Tehran. By ancient prescription our garden was devoted to the women of every rank who chose to make use of it, all males being carefully excluded, the Gebr gardeners excepted, who among Persian women are counted as nothing. The garden is occupied during the entire day by three or four hundred females—princesses, ladies, and

others of inferior degree—who devote themselves to smoking, and eating lettuces, radishes, if they happen to be in season, or sweetmeats. The day never concludes without a battle royal, hand and tongue, between them and the Gebrs, who, strong in their dignity of gardeners to the Vezeer Mookhtar, as the foreign Ministers are absurdly called,* are unable to tolerate the unblushing pilfering of plants, flowers, and fruit of these dames, headed by the princesses, who never fail to put to flight the "fire-worshipping infidels." That powerful ruler in the East Aadet—*custom*—has given the ladies of Tehran vested rights over her Majesty's garden one day in the year, which they stoutly maintain.

February 10*th.*—In passing through the streets of Tehran, one would be disposed to consider the Persians a very musical race. From all sides melodious sounds, somewhat monotonous, it is true, constantly strike the ear. And yet they cannot be called a musical people; far from it. The combination of second tenor and bass is unknown to them, and unison is all they aim at, no matter what number of voices, or of fiddles, guitars, harps, and dulcimers, form the concert. A lad warbling in his throat, at his highest and loudest scream, in imitation of a nightingale, is the perfection of vocal music, which they will listen to with pleasure for hours, and beguile the longest

* This name, so full of false pretension, was introduced by the Russians, and for no good motive. The word "vezeer," they said, implied "minister," consequently they were vezeers. It certainly does mean minister, but only a Minister of State, which a minister plenipotentiary is not. Thus a spurious consequence is acquired, which the English have been forced to partake in self-defence.

day's journey with the same dulcet strains. But the street music I allude to is a different thing: it proceeds from the bricklayers. In bricklaying in Persia the brick is thrown from hand to hand until at length it is pitched to the oostād, the master mason. To relieve his monotonous labour the oostād has recourse to a chant, fully as monotonous as his work, but sweet in tone. In general he combines a little polemical casuistry and devotion with his psalmody, by directing a vast quantity of abuse against Omar, the second Caliph after Mahommed, whom the Persians regard with bitter enmity, as being the leader in the exclusion of Ali from the Caliphate. He sings to words in this style:—

Khishtee bideh māra jānum
Lâanet illāhee ber Oma-a-ar.
Give me a brick then, my life,
And the curse of God light on Omar.

Yekee deeger bideh bimun azeezum
Inshallah kheir neh beened Oma-a-r.
Give me another, now, my darling,
Please God, Omar will not have any luck.

On the day on which Omar was assassinated, the powers of the bricklayers in poetical and melodious imprecation wax stronger. It is a strange circumstance that a man should daily suffer malediction twelve hundred years after his death. Judas Iscariot is better off. The women distinguish themselves by their devotion on this anniversary, though their mode of evincing their piety is both inconvenient and whimsical. Perched on the flat roof of their houses overlooking the street, and armed with a large pot of water, they lie in wait for the passers by, and the heedless passenger is soused with the water, while a triumphant

scream proclaims "Omar, laanehoo Allāh" (Omar, God curse him!). Beyond that general solver of all difficulties and mysteries in Persia, Kaëdeh—custom, I never could obtain any explanation of this practice, unless perhaps the nearly equally general and less complimentary one of "Zun est! Deeger" (they are women! what can you expect?). The Government never countenanced these ebullitions of zeal, still it was not easy to punish the women. When the Turkish ambassador came to Tehran, it was feared he might be insulted by expressions like these. Nothing, however, occurred to disturb harmony, perhaps from his Excellency taking the precaution of remaining at home on the day of Omar Kooshan (slaying Omar).

The Persians are a curious combination of bigotry and tolerance, or perhaps indifferentism; but in the towns where Europeans reside, fanaticism is obviously fast decaying. It is believed that had Constantinople been their capital, the Persians would long ere this have far surpassed the Turks in religious toleration. A Turk has an Armenian for his cook, and his bath is freely open to a Christian. A Persian would on no account submit to have his own kitchen presided over by an Armenian, who kills fowls unlawfully by wringing their necks instead of cutting their throats; and when a European enters a public bath, it must be by night, stealthily and at some expense. On the other hand, a Persian never hesitates to rise on receiving a Christian visitor; which is such gall and wormwood to any Ottoman whose official position compels him to show this mark of deference to a European, that he generally contrives on such occasions to be standing deeply engaged in the perusal of a letter. A Persian has likewise no hesi-

tation in uttering the salutation of Salāmun Aleikoom, to a Christian, which a Turk would rather suffer martyrdom than do. No contempt is felt by the natives of Persia towards Europeans, though occasionally a moolla or a devout merchant may destroy the teacup his European guest has used; on the contrary, they venerate them as their superiors in almost every quality. A Turk, unless he be educated in Europe, and therefore *denationalized*, has seldom any feelings towards a Feringhee but those of dislike and contempt. As a proof of the correctness of the above opinion, I may mention that several years ago a private soldier deserted from the Russian army and entered the service of the Shah. He rose to the rank of brigadier and khan, and notwithstanding that he continued to be a Christian, he was made military governor of the holy and bigoted city of Meshed. He governed the intolerant population with such success, that his departure was the cause of general regret.

February 15*th*.—This is decidedly an odd people. The entire nation seems to be in debt, commencing with the Shah, who is in debt to the Emperor of Russia, and ending with the humblest muleteer. The marvel is who are those that lend the money; they, it may be conjectured, being out of debt. Every man of rank one hears of seems to be in the same predicament, though it is to be suspected this poverty is often feigned to escape from the weighty hand of exaction. To-day Malik Meerza Beg, our naïb ferash bashee, or deputy-groom of the chambers, as he has dubbed himself, presented himself after breakfast, with suppliant and dolorous looks; and, coming to the point, declared his debts pressed on him heavily, and that

we were bound to help him by a loan of 12*l*. The pretexts of the borrower are usually either he had lately taken a fresh wife, or his family was large, his father had died, the wall of his house had fallen, the roof leaked, &c. But a new wife is the prevailing cause of debt. Our butler Mahommed Agha, not long after entering our service, took a second helpmate; after due time his household was increased by a third; and at length, not having neglected the opportunities that occurred for improving his finances, a rumour reached us that a fourth espousal was in progress. This was alarming, as all these ladies were necessarily to live at our cost; so Mahommed Agha was warned that if he remained with us, he must not anticipate the promised number of houris in Paradise. Another person, as heavily oppressed by his debts and creditors as an ancient Roman nobleman, was Suleiman Agha, a ferash e khelwet (valet de chambre). The cause was the same as in the previous instance. At the Aras he had neglected to join us, being more agreeably employed in taking a wife at Tabreez. On arriving at Tehran, we found he had not previously been a bachelor; but he hastened to make himself a widower by divorcing his wife because she had become blind, and then speedily took another. He seemed to adopt the precaution of having a wife in each large town; for afterwards, when he accompanied us to Ispahan, we found that there also a wife was ready to relieve his loneliness. The whole nation, I am told—the town part of it, at least—is more or less in the same condition.

The customs of the country are highly encouraging to lenders of money, and to extended views of matrimony.

Interest of any kind is repudiated by the precepts of Mahommed; still it is admitted in the "common law." Legal interest is limited to 12 per cent.; but it seldom amounts to less than 25, and often reaches 50, 60, or 100 per cent. A clever mode has been adopted of cheating the law, which would not recognize the validity of the interest. A person borrowing a thousand tomans, at 25 per cent. interest, gives a promissory note for 1250 tomans, as if that were the real amount lent. I am informed that in England devices of a similar nature are not unknown.

Matrimonial engagements are of two kinds. The real marriage—the one looked upon as respectable—is confined to four wives, and is called akd. This is permanent, unless divorce takes place. In the other there is no limit to the number of wives; but then the period of the engagement is restricted, and never exceeds ninety years. This is the most honourable term of contract in the secondary, or seegha, marriage; but even this unreachable period does not place the seegha e neved saleh (ninety years) on a level with the akdee wife. Their sons, however, are on an equality as regards station and everything else, unless one of the wives happens to be of the reigning race of Kajjar, or of a rank much above that of the husband. A man of station chooses the akdee wife from his own class in life, while the seeghas are from an inferior rank, and perform menial offices for the former. The marriage ceremony is very simple: the family of the bridegroom, with a moolla, assemble at the bride's house; behind a curtain are the female relations, with the bride. The moolla asks her if she is willing to marry the bridegroom elect; and after a long delay (which is a point of

honour) she whispers, Yes. The contract is then signed and registered, and sweetmeats are sent to the bride. In the evening she is conducted in procession, with pipes and drums and all her worldly goods, to her husband's house.

The lot of women among the tribes, and among the peasantry, is not, from all I hear, an unhappy one. Their interests are identified with their husbands: divorce is rare; and the number of wives does not often exceed one. In the towns it seems to be otherwise. If they are young, handsome, or powerfully connected, matters are tolerably smooth. But when the wife loses her personal attraction she often sinks down to a household drudge; and at the best is seldom free from contention with her rivals in the haram. I do not think a Persian woman ever feels the same affection for her husband as some Europeans do. But when a rival wife is introduced into an establishment her *pin-money* is decreased at Nowrooz (New Year's Day); her allowance for new clothes for herself and establishment is lessened; her children's interests suffer, if she has any; and if not, perhaps her more fortunate rival may have a son; besides a variety of other annoyances. Persian women seem to me to have no idea of a calm, tranquil life. Novelty, or whatever causes excitement, is what they seek, and, I dare say, they would be miserable without that stimulus. They have not strong religious or moral principle; and the example of their husband is said to be no encouragement to domestic happiness.

When a woman happens to possess unusual talent, or has a stronger understanding than her husband, she maintains her supremacy to the last, not only over her asso-



Persian Lady in Walking Costume.

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ciate wives, but over her husband, his purse, and property. I have heard of several gentlemen about the court whose wives would not suffer either the introduction of other inmates to the haram, or drinking-parties, or any expenditure excepting on the most narrow scale. One of our neighbours was a merchant who possessed a temper that led him into frequent and noisy quarrels with his wives. The ladies seemed perfectly able to maintain their ground, as far as words went, and generally so overwhelmed him with abuse, that flight or a beating used to be his common resource. I remember on one occasion a member of the mission was calling on a former Minister for Foreign Affairs on some business in which certain official documents required to be sealed. When the time for sealing arrived, the seals were missing; and after a long search it was discovered, to his Excellency's intense confusion, that they had been carried off by his wife, who had gone on a pilgrimage to Shah Abdul Azeem, a place of great holiness and resort for the ladies of Tehran, five miles from town.

A Persian woman of the upper class leads a life of idleness and luxury, though rather monotonous according to our ideas of existence. No balls, plays, or operas, no dinners, no new books, no watering-places, no Paris or Rome, diversify the ordinary routine. Like the men, talking, gossip and scandal are the occupation of their lives. All classes enjoy abundance of liberty, more so, I think, than among us. The complete envelopment of the face and person disguises them effectually from the nearest relatives, and destroying, when convenient, all distinction of rank, gives unrestrained freedom. The bazars are crowded

with women in this most ungraceful disguise. The weekly bath and constant visits consume a large share of their time; and Thursday afternoon is devoted to a mock pilgrimage to some shrine outside the town, or else to the grave of some relation. It was curious to meet a lady of rank on an occasion of this kind, mounted *en cavalier* on a tall Toorkoman horse, which she managed with skill. Her female attendants surrounded her, riding in the same style; and her other servants remained at a short distance, some in front, and some behind. If no Persians were too near, they made little scruple of raising their veils, for the indulgence of our and their own curiosity. Women of the higher classes frequently acquire a knowledge of reading and writing, and of the choice poetical works in their native language; as well as of the art of reading, though, perhaps, not of understanding, the Koran. In the royal family, in particular, and among the ladies of the tribe of Kajjar, these accomplishments are so common that they themselves conduct their correspondence without the customary aid of a meerza, or secretary. Cooking, or at least its superintendence, is another of their pastimes, especially among the Kajjar ladies. One of the princesses, whose husband was of similar rank, and was on intimate terms of acquaintance with my husband, used frequently to send me savoury dishes at our dinner-hour. An intimation always accompanied the viands, of their being the preparation of the "Shazadeh Khanum," the lady princess, herself. Sometimes a very young lamb, roasted whole, decked with flowers, with a rich stuffing of chesnuts or pistachios, would appear as our *pièce de résistance;* or else dolma, which consists of cabbages or oranges stuffed with forced-

meat. The latter is an achievement in the culinary art. The confectionary, which is the test of a lady's proficiency in gastronomic science, was of great variety, and exceedingly good. Persian confectionary, in general, is seldom entitled to any praise; for, though endless in exterior variety, it has only one flavour, that of sugar. Persian ladies are accused of indulging to excess in exciting beverages, by which I mean those contrary to the religious law. I myself never saw the slightest approach to anything of the kind; and I am disposed to believe there is no foundation for the accusation. Of all places in the world Tehran is the most addicted to scandal and detraction: they are its pastime and its business. I must confess, however, that I once saw a princess, during a visit, with a special teapot by her side, out of the spout of which she drank from time to time. No one could tell what it contained. She herself declared it was physic.

The above is Persian female life in its best aspect. If looked at in its worst, I am sure fearful tragedies and scenes of horror would be revealed. Power in the anderoon is nearly despotic. An immense deal of cruelty, even murder itself, can be committed in the haram, without any atonement. A needy, harsh, disappointed, profligate man, responsible to no one, often wreaks his temper on the persons least capable of resistance. But he, too, is often the sufferer by his severities. An ill-treated slave, male or female, sometimes one of his wives, will administer a potion, and terminate his career—perhaps without designing so tragical a result. Detection is not easy, and many deaths are attributed to the practices of the anderoon. When a woman finds herself neglected and cast aside, and that she

has ceased to please, she sometimes has recourse to incantations and endeavours to bewitch her husband. She decks herself, and, if possible, him, with charms and talismans; she presents nazr—as an offering to God or to any of the prophets or saints is called—of a sheep, or anything else (like the Jews of old), which is afterwards distributed among the poor. I may mention that Imām Hoossein is the special favourite of the women in Persia. An old woman in my service once told me she cared very little for Mahommed, as she irreverently called him, but that she had a deep affection for Imām Hoossein. No doubt her attachment was founded on the scenic representation of his sufferings she had annually seen at the Tazeea. If Imām Hoossein, or whatever patron the forlorn dame may have adopted, should not yield to her supplications, she then has recourse to a love-potion. I do not know all the ingredients of which this compound is formed; but incantation enters in a large degree into its preparation. One of the Persian secretaries of the mission told me it was made of all sorts of horrible things, one of which, I remember, was a frog. Not seldom, however, the dose is too powerful, and puts an end to the patient's worldly cares for ever. I mentioned before that Suleiman Agha, one of our servants, urged as a plea for one of his unceasing divorces that his "burnt father" of a wife (meaning that his wife's father was burning) had on a certain occasion nearly killed him, by administering a love-draught. The very memory of it seemed to renew all his horror, quite forgetting the ill-treatment which had provoked her to seek help in this dangerous remedy. The grand ambition of every married woman is to have several sons, as

through them she is secured consideration and a provision in advanced years. Daughters, as usual, count as nothing.

The mortality among children is immense, owing to neglect, ignorance, and laziness. I remember a little prince, of eight years of age, who came to see my children. His stockings dropped into a pool of water, and his nurse made him wear them when quite wet. He is since dead, and this is the fate of all weak and delicate children. None but the strong children survive; and the result is that the Persians, though few in number, are strong, stout, and hardy. The population of Persia is supposed not to increase; nor with causes like these in operation could it well do so. Dr. Cloquet, the Shah's French physician, son and nephew of the two famous surgeons of the same name, expressed to me his conviction that not above three children in ten outlived their third year. Ladies, of even moderate wealth and station, never nurse their children, and do not seem to care for them when they are very young. Afterwards they are affectionate mothers. These nurses have a habit of quieting their charge, and their own children too, with bits of opium, of a size which our own doctor assured me was quite astounding.

Among the Persians an odd system of nomenclature for their wives is commonly adopted. Instead of using their names, they avoid doing so; and when addressing or speaking of their wives, they designate them by the name of the wife's eldest son. Thus, instead of saying Zooleikha, for instance, he will call her Mader e Ali, mother of Ali. Khanum (lady) is, however, the term preferred. The Sadr Azim, or Prime Minister, I am told, always

talks of his wife, who is his cousin, under the designation of Dookhter e Amooüm (my uncle's daughter). But his Excellency is somewhat peculiar in his phraseology. Whenever he ascends to the regions of high diplomacy (wherever they may be), his favourite and incessant asseveration is, Beh marg e Kassim (By the death of Kassim!). Kassim is his eldest son.

CHAPTER X.

Approach of Nowrooz — Dunning derveeshes — Ceremonial of the Nowrooz — Her Majesty's birthday — Entertainment to Persians — Wines of Sheeraz and Ispahan — Dinner on a large scale — Migration to the hills — Value of water — Our encampment — The Mission village — Sanctuary — Miraculous cow — Refugees in the Missions — Civil and criminal law.

March 10th.—NOWROOZ (New Year's Day) is approaching. Colonel S—— wished to-day to visit the Prime Minister, but he was informed that his Excellency was busily engaged in selecting shawls. The Shah on the 22nd of this month bestows on all his courtiers some mark of his bounty: Cashmere shawls to those of high rank; descending thence in a sliding-scale to cloth coats and spangled muslin. It is a heavy tax on his Majesty, who, however, it may be conjectured, finds compensation elsewhere. Though the splendour of the Nowrooz has decayed, and the value of the gifts has decreased, the total abrogation of this ancient national festival would scarcely be politic. It is a season of general festivity. The Persians have been more rational than we in this matter. Instead of choosing the winter solstice for its celebration, they have selected the moment when the sun is entering the northern hemisphere for marking the commencement of the year. On the 22nd of March every family, attired in new garments, is seated at the dinner-cloth (there being no

table), which is covered with food, according to the means of the master of the household. A large basin of water is placed in the centre, which, when the sun crosses the equator, is supposed to be ruffled by the jerk the earth receives in consequence. At that moment they all embrace and wish each other a happy new year; they then partake of food. There is a simplicity and appearance of affection in this ceremony at variance with the character of Persians.

About this time I was crossing one day to the garden on the other side of the street, when I heard a loud voice exclaim, "Hoo; Allāh Tâālā; Khoodā Vezeer e Mookhtarpaëdar kooned, khoodā khānumra omrdihed!" (He is the great God; God preserve the Vezeer Mookhtar; God preserve the Khanum!) These were the sounds uttered by a wild-looking derveesh, seated in a tent four feet high, and the same in length, which was pitched under the garden wall. By his side he had sown a field of wheat, about a yard square, as a hint, that if he were not removed by a consideration, he would remain until the wheat was fit for the sickle and cut; screaming "Hoo, hak" incessantly, and blowing on his cow's horn. But our derveesh was too friendly and polite for any such extremities. It turned out that this was a tax annually levied on the respectable householders of Tehran. I saw another of the fraternity at the Russian Minister's door, and various others *encamped* at the houses of the people of the city, each with his field of wheat. They get their presents, and then depart. I am told that a few years ago there was one of this brotherhood, named Lootee Ali, Buffoon Ali, or Derveesh Ali, who used to bestow in the

utmost good humour the most dreadful abuse on every one he met, from the Shah, with whom he was a great favourite, downwards. He gained a great deal of money, which he spent entirely in charity. Their pertinacity in extortion is said to be marvellous. I remember hearing of a very mad, opium-eating, chers- or bang-consuming derveesh, who demanded a large sum from the English Resident at Bushire, which the latter refused. The holy brother said nothing, but looked iniquity. He planted himself at the gate, and planted the wheat too, close under the staff where the English flag used to fly. For three days he remained silent. On the fourth he exclaimed, "Hak, hak," in a loud monotonous voice, and maintained that cry almost incessantly day and night, for three days, without any symptom of yielding on either side. I ought to remark, that to use violence for his expulsion would have been injudicious. On the fourth day the derveesh drew forth his horn, and, alternating between it and the everlasting "Hak, hak!" the Resident was reduced to despair, and almost to yielding. At last he remembered that his flagstaff required washing. In a short time ten or fifteen seamen, summoned from a man-of-war in the roads, were mounted on the flagstaff, with an abundant supply of buckets of water. In a few minutes the flagstaff was well washed, and the derveesh too, and put to flight in discomfiture.

March 22, Nowrooz.—Every one in new garments to-day. The whole of the servants of the Mission, some sixty or seventy in number, arrayed in large new cloaks of English cloth—so called at least, having English stamps and marks on it, though shrewdly suspected not to be of

English parentage. They looked exceedingly well. At nine o'clock one of the staff of the Foreign Office, conducting some twenty ferashes laden with immense trays containing sugarloaves, sugarcandy, and sweetmeats, presented himself to offer the good wishes of the Shah for the coming year. At noon all the Missions waited on his Majesty, to offer congratulations on the part of their sovereigns. As they had a private audience for this purpose previously to the grand salām or levee, there is little to describe. His Majesty is seated in full costume, half Persian, half European, loaded with the most costly jewellery, his enormous jewelled crown, and sword blazing with diamonds from hilt to point, lying by his side, waiting for the admission of the public before undergoing the fatigue of bearing the weighty diadem. As his Majesty is in the highest degree affable and condescending, and abounds in agreeable conversation, as a Persian king ought to do, half his life being spent in talking, the audience passes off highly satisfactorily. In the afternoon a fine elephant belonging to the king, accompanied by his keeper and some musicians, came to wish us a happy new year. He entered the low gateway into the lawn on his knees, and performed sundry evolutions; he then got his present, and went away. The day after Nowrooz the labour of the season began, and continued for a week subsequently. Every acquaintance of the Minister of suitable rank must be visited; the days are spent in visits, and every visit produces its deluge of tea, coffee, and pipes (water pipes). Then come the bazdeed, the return visits, with a repetition of the same sufferings. Altogether a good constitution is requisite; but, as

my husband used to maintain, it was necessary to do something once a year for the good of her Majesty's service.

Now begins the glorious weather of Persia, lasting until the middle of May, when it becomes a great deal too hot. In April the nightingales commence their songs, and the rose-trees begin to open their blossoms. Our garden abounded in the former, who used to beguile the entire night with their minstrelsy. But I leave these things to the imagination, which is much more potent than the pen —than mine at least.

May 24th.—This was another day of fatigue, in tea and coffee drinking, in honour of her Majesty's birthday. From an early hour visitors poured in to offer their congratulations, and among them two officers in full court costume, on the part of the Shah and the Prime Minister, to convey their congratulations on the auspicious occasion. In the full-dress of the court, the tall black lambskin cap is changed for a turban of shawl; and in place of the stockings without shoes, on entering the room a pair of red cloth boots reaching to the knee is worn. I suppose the latter is a substitute for the heavy Tartar boot worn at the courts of the Moghul sovereigns. It was upon me, however, that the heavier toil of the day fell. At night there was a dinner-party of thirty-six persons to celebrate the event, and wish prosperity to the sovereign of England. When it is considered that the attendants were all Persians, and that everything is conducted as like Europe as possible, it may be imagined what time and labour were expended in drilling the Diggories of the Mission. The labour was certainly great, yet I never was reduced to such extremity as a lady in Tehran, who was on such

occasions forced to aid in dressing the dinner herself. Twelve of the guests were Persian gentlemen; and as in Persian estimation a solemn dinner is incomplete unless the fare is exceedingly in excess; and farther, as the numerous retinue of servants accompanying each Persian expects a share in the feast, it may be imagined what an undertaking an entertainment of this kind is in Tehran. To complete the matter, I was excluded from the banquet in consequence of the presence of the Persian gentlemen. I gladly, therefore, spent my solitary evening, resting after the heat and toil of the day, shut up in my anderoon, surrounded by a retinue of dogs, who would not have been more out of place than myself, and who were greatly disturbed by the distant sounds of the band playing God save the Queen, which it continued to do for four or five hours, only varying occasionally with the beautiful Russian air of God preserve the Emperor. It was really amusing to see the deference these dogs showed poor Crab. Greyhounds, pointers, &c., would fall flat when he sprang at them, if he thought they monopolised too much of my attention. There was one rugged fellow we called Diver, who arrived from Asterabad with some European travellers. He approved apparently of our mode of living, for he hid himself in an empty room in the Mission for two days after their departure, and remained with us ever since. One of the gentlemen of the Mission afterwards happened to visit Asterabad, and saw a numerous independent connexion of Diver's, who supported themselves by going into the sea and eating the small fish they managed to catch. I should perhaps apologise for writing at all about our dogs, but they were so much of companions to me in Persia, I cannot avoid

recurring to them. To return to the banquet; it was kept up till a late hour. Persians, I am told, delight in champagne, next to brandy. On these public occasions, however, the most confirmed topers refrain from touching wine, lest in a promiscuous assembly of their countrymen their reputation might suffer damage from evil report. But I hear that some among them retired to a quiet nook with one or two trusty boon companions—

"They had been fou for weeks thegither"—

where they made amends by quaffing champagne and sherry in tumblers.

Persians are extremely fond of European wines, still none among them, even the richest, are willing to undergo the expense of its conveyance from Europe. They satisfy themselves with the thin growths of their own vineyards, quantity compensating for quality. In almost all the chief towns a great deal of wine is manufactured, and certainly not intended for the sole consumption of Armenians. That of Sheeraz has, of course, a wide reputation, and the wine of Ispahan is thought not much inferior. I remember an Englishman imposing with success as choice Burgundy, a bottle of the latter on a party of European connoisseurs. Still I am told the wines of Persia are far from being wholesome, either from imperfect manufacture, or from being used too soon. There seems to be no reason why a country abounding in the choicest grapes should be unable to produce good wine. The manufacture is of the coarsest kind, and, one would think, an antidote to excess. The bunches are collected without any selection, or the removal of the unsound grapes, and

thrown into a heap, stalks and all, and the juice is extracted by the pressure of naked feet.

On the birthday of their sovereigns, the foreign representatives endeavour to celebrate the occasion with as much display as the country admits of. An exhibition of fireworks was generally the mode in which the Russian Mission sought notoriety. Some years ago, before my arrival in Persia, my husband thought of a somewhat novel expedient for imparting celebrity to her Majesty's birthday. This was to give a dinner to all the beggars in Tehran on the 24th of May. 'It appears to have been an extraordinary scene, as described to me by one of the gentlemen of the Mission. The feast was put under the management of one of the Persian secretaries. He caused a number of large tents, without their walls, to be pitched in a spacious piece of ground adjoining the garden, where the horses used to be exercised. He then hired a number of cooks, and a collection of enormous cauldrons, five or six feet wide, and the same in depth; which were placed on blazing fires close to the tents. Something like a flock of sheep was purchased. Notice was sent to the beggars, that at twelve o'clock on the 24th dinner would be ready. Long before the time every avenue was crowded with the blind, the lame, the infirm, and the various extraordinary objects with which Tehran is crowded. The gates were opened, a rush was made, and in a moment the enclosure was filled. The dinner consisted of pillaos of mutton and rice, bread, and sugar sherbet, that is, *eau sucrée;* and the rule was, that each person, having eaten to repletion, was to depart by another gate. Nothing could exceed the confusion and contention and clamours

for admittance. The walls were scaled, and the gates nearly burst open. The uproar was compared to a town taken by assault. Those inside, the women especially, filled their pockets, and said they had not had enough; and when driven out at one gate, they went round and entered as fresh visitors at the other, making a new attack on the eatables. The dinner-party to the beggars was converted into an entertainment to all the workmen and small tradesmen and tradeswomen in the neighbourhood. So great and unexpected was the crowd, that the supplies ran low, and purchases were obliged to be made at the cook-shops in the bazar. All were at length filled, and the crowd by slow degrees departed. Seven thousand was the number, according to Persian computation, which by English calculation may be reduced to less than half. The feast had certainly reached an unexpected magnitude, but the object aimed at was, I conjecture gained, for a great sensation was produced. If Persian benedictions could serve her Majesty, she had them to satiety from each guest who partook of the pillaos. The succeeding year the feast was renewed, with the precaution of placing a strong guard of soldiers at each gate, and another in the middle of the enclosure.

May 25th.—Notwithstanding that we are more than three thousand feet above the level of the sea, the sun's rays have acquired intense heat, and it is time to make an exodus to the mountains, which our great dinner alone prevented us from doing before. The Shah, with a large portion of the court, has already left the city, and gone to reside in one of his summer or garden houses, near the walls, and by-and-by he will move up —

to the mountains. Next month nearly half the inhabitants will have emigrated to avoid the heat and the unhealthy atmosphere of Tehran. This capital has nothing whatever in its favour. It is situated in a desolate plain, ten miles to the south of the Elboorz range of mountains, which run from west to east. It is supposed to contain 80,000 inhabitants in winter. The above beautiful range of mountains, crowned with the magnificent peak of Demawend, saves Tehran from being one of the most frightful places in the world. It contains fine bazars, constructed by the late Prime Minister, and a good deal of trade converges here from the four quarters of Persia. There are no buildings of note, excepting the chief mosque, and water is so bad and so scarce, that the portion required for drinking is brought daily from a distance by all those who can afford it.

May 27th.—We had to-day a specimen of the value of water in Persia. The two Gebr gardeners, with three Persian soldiers of the guard at the gate of the Mission, rushed towards the room we were sitting in. One of the former had a large bunch of his beard in his hand, which he stretched out at arm's length. One of the soldiers held a handkerchief to his mouth, as if indicating the loss of a tooth, and all had their shirts and inner vests torn open at the neck, which among Persians is an unfailing sign of woe, as among the Israelites of old. The Gebrs are a stolid immoveable race, but this was an opportunity for emotion not to be neglected. The Father of the beard, as an Arab would say, Ardesheer, was spokesman: "Kooshteh shudem, moordem!—I am killed, I am dead! Is this the way to treat the Vezeer e Mookh-

tar's gardener?" &c. Tehran is dependent for its supply of water, in part on wells, of which the water is exceedingly bad and unwholesome, and in part on various kanāts which have been conducted into the city. Two days and two nights of each week are allotted for supplying the extensive gardens and premises of the Mission with water from one of these kanāts. But as the stream enters on the north side of the city, while we resided exactly at the south side, it has to pass through the ordeal of a mile and a half among thirsty Tehranees before it reaches the Mission. It is consequently necessary to station guards at intervals to watch its safe progress through the town. All sorts of schemes are in request to waylay the water. When a watchman is absent, or remiss, or bribed, the stream is turned out of its course, and every one helps himself or fills his cistern. At another time everything seems correct; no impediment occurs to the water, yet none of it reaches the Mission. The cunning Iranees have bored channels underground from their houses to the stream, and thus purloined nearly the whole of the water. Knowing the urgent wants of the citizens, these peculations would have been overlooked; but very often, as in the present instance, the theft was supported by main force, leading to blows and a battle, in which the Mission guards and servants, being the weaker party, generally fared ill. Then followed demands for punishment, in exacting which it was necessary to be pertinacious, if only to save her Majesty's Mission from dying of thirst. What made these beatings of the servants more provoking was the donation in free gift to the citizens by Colonel S—— of the whole of the water to

which he was entitled by right. He even nominated a meerāb, lord of the water, to superintend its fair distribution through the different streets. For my part, I believe that this dignified appointment only led to the enrichment of his lordship, who sold the water to the best bidder; he would be a strange Persian if he did not. As I before mentioned, the villagers contend for the possession of streams of water in the same manner, but with much more fierceness; their crops being often dependent for irrigation on the result of the combat. These kanāts lead to other causes of quarrel. If a man in authority who has constructed one of these beneficent works happens to lead his kanāt in the direction of that of his weaker neighbour, his charitable views become so comprehensive, that he seldom hesitates to undermine and carry off the whole of the water into his own channel. A fight follows, either on the spot or before the Kazee, in both cases the result being much the same.

May 29th.—We have encamped at the Mission village of Goolahek, seven miles from town, near the foot of Elboorz, and 3800 feet above the level of the sea. Ours is certainly a camp on a large scale. We have sleeping-tents, nursery-tents, and my private sitting-room-tent, all enclosed in a high wall of canvas, and forming the anderoon. Then detached are the dining-tent, drawing-room-tent, and tents for each of the gentlemen of the Mission. To me it looks very magnificent, yet I am told it is paltry in comparison with the good old times that are gone. From the size of these tents, some of them being thirty feet in length, their double roofs and double walls several feet apart, I had anticipated a comfortable

residence during the summer. But I am disappointed beyond measure; the dust and the heat being intolerable, in spite of a stream of water which I had caused to flow through my tent. The Russian Mission is encamped at another village, half a mile distant. The Shah has moved up to his summer-palace at Niaveran, close under the hills, and the whole country is covered with white tents and encampments. We are now in the district of Shamirān, which, I am told, is the equivalent of Semiramis. The villages are surrounded with fruit-trees of every description, particularly white mulberries, of which the Persians eat enormous quantities: indeed their consumption of every kind of fruit is prodigious. The camp-life is still more monotonous than that of the town; the distances being much greater, visits and gossip are rarer. It is a curious circumstance that from nine to ten in the morning seems to be the hottest part of the day, hotter even than two o'clock. The heat is so intense that it is impossible to move out until the sun has actually set, and even then the ground is reeking with heat. At that hour we mount our horses, and take a slow languid ride about the hills and villages. Darkness so quickly follows sunset that the ride is a short one. Walking is out of the question. Decidedly Persia is not a country to select as a residence from choice. Neither can it be healthy; for though the natives are strong and stout, as negroes are in the most pestiferous swamps of Africa, still one sees extremely few persons of very advanced years. Nearly all the Europeans at Tehran seem delicate; the Russians appear to bear the climate best, though they are said to take less care of their health.

The term Mission-village deserves some explanation. It means that the Shah has bestowed the "teeool" of the village on the Mission; this again implies that his Majesty has renounced his claim over the revenue, and bestowed it on the British legation. The revenue amounts to 30 tomans, or 15*l.*, but the donation confers considerable authority on the British Minister, who thereby becomes lord paramount in the village. It entitles him to claim a piece of land for pitching his camp, and confers many immunities according to Persian usage. On the other hand, the benefit to the villagers is immense. No tax-gatherers molest them, no soldiers are quartered on them, no levies of provisions are exacted; they are under English protection, and are thereby safe from molestation. The consequence is that the village is most flourishing, the value of its land has increased, and many people build houses within it merely to enjoy similar privileges.

This system of teeool is one of the great banes of Persia. Its evil is admitted, but too many interests are concerned in its maintenance to permit its abrogation even by the despotic monarch of Persia. Custom has given the owner of the teeool exclusive rights over eggs, fowls, lambs, firewood; fodder, fruit, &c., and, if he chances to be a man of rank, he takes care that custom shall have the amplest latitude. In our own case, however, I found it of very little profit, and my dream of abundance of fresh eggs was soon dissipated. The Persian peasant is perhaps the best part of the nation, but oppression has made him callous, and not very sensible to emotions of gratitude. We were, therefore, welcome

visitors, prices were doubled, and a present for the celebration of the Tazeea, with an English cloth cloak at Nowrooz for the Ked Khoda, or chief of the village, were the incumbrances charged upon our fief.

June 3rd.—One is often reminded in this country of the state of manners in Europe some centuries ago, when armies consisted of feudal retainers, when power took the place of law, when might made right. Sanctuary in shrines is still in full operation in Persia; and though often an evil, it is on the whole, as it was in Europe in those days, a vast benefit. Where the law is weak and the administration corrupt, society requires some extraneous support independent of both. The guilty, it is true, sometimes escape, but the innocent and weak are often protected. A struggle between the government and the priesthood relative to the right of asylum in shrines, mosques, and other places of sanctity, has been long going on; one party seeking its overthrow, the other its maintenance for the preservation of their own influence over the people. Intelligence has just arrived from Tabreez of an extraordinary device adopted by the moollas of that city for restoring the right of bast, or sanctuary, to its ancient vigour. A cow being conducted to the slaughter-house, in passing by a noted shrine in the middle of the city, twice took refuge in the holy spot. On the third repetition of the disregard of this appeal to the power of the defunct saint, the butcher was struck dead. How this portion of the miracle was effected I know not. The news spread in a moment through the city, and all the zeal of the Moslems was roused. In general it finds a vent in

the pillage of the Armenians or the Jews; but on this occasion it took a different direction. Miracles in abundance were performed. The blind saw, the lame walked, maladies innumerable were healed. A pitch of enthusiasm was raised which was described to be "frightful." Illuminations on an unheard-of scale took place during three successive nights; the shrine was exalted into an inviolable sanctuary, and gamblers and drunkards who should dishonour its precincts were to be slain. But the government was strong in the hands of the Ameer e Nizam, the Prime Minister. I may as well now anticipate events, and mention that, before many months had elapsed, some of the principal instigators of these prodigies were brought to Tehran, where they remained in much discomfort, and were only released on promising to work no more miracles:—

De par le Roi défense à Dieu,
De faire miracle dans ce lieu.

The foreign Missions are inviolable asylums; no one can be molested within their walls. Bahman Meerza, the Shah's uncle, and governor of the valuable province of Azerbijan, took refuge in the Russian Mission. The sequel of this step was his transmission to Russia as the guest of the Emperor, where he now enjoys a large pension; still he pines for Persia and pillao.

The Shah's stable is an asylum, almost against the Shah himself. Unless in an extraordinary case, his Majesty would not like to use force in the removal of a person who had thus thrown himself on his protection or on his mercy. The reason of the stable having this sanctity conferred on

it seems lost in antiquity. In passing among the trees where our horses were picketed, I was surprised to see seated there a Persian gentleman, on approaching whom, I perceived him to be perfectly blind, his eyes having been removed from the sockets. On ascertaining that we were near him, he stood up and loudly claimed the protection of the Dowlet Aaleeya Inglees, the sublime English Government. I forget this gentleman's name, whose condition and striking appearance greatly engaged my sympathy. He was a khan, and chief of a tribe in Kermān or Yezd, and he and his family were among the most atrocious criminals in Persia. The murders and acts of violence committed by him and his sons exceeded belief. In retribution, he himself had been blinded, and two of the latter had been put to death. Even this did not cure his turbulence. He had lately committed some new act of atrocity, and fearing the consequences, had fled for safety to our stable, with the hope also of obtaining English intercession. His pitiable condition prevented an order for his immediate expulsion, which would have been considered discreditable; so the khan was left to manage matters as he could. Finding himself disappointed, he in a few days withdrew; having no doubt applied a bribe in the proper quarter, and secured impunity for his misdeeds. In town, criminals used often to take refuge in the Mission. To deliver them to justice would have brought on the Mission bud nāmee, or bad reputation—a subject to which, curiously enough, Persians constantly advert; so at night they are ordered to depart, and seek for safety at some other shrine than that of the

sovereign of England. I have seen it necessary to use considerable force on such occasions, and loud screams of Amān e Padshah Inglees! Amān e Vezeer Mookhtar! Amān Khanum! Amān Sahib e Koochik! (Quarter from the Queen! Quarter from the Minister! Quarter from the lady! Quarter from the little gentleman!—meaning my son of a few months old) have reached my anderoon. Persians of all classes used to take asylum. Slaves escaping from the cruelty of their masters were often to be seen. These were undoubted objects of commiseration. After allowing them to remain some days, until anger had cooled, a reconciliation was effected to the satisfaction of all concerned; a solemn promise being exacted that no repetition of ill treatment was to occur. The promise would certainly be faithfully kept during some months. Princes, khans, military officers, might at times be seen taking refuge within the Mission walls. The culpable among these, such as embezzlers of public money, fraudulent bankers, oppressors, were invited to withdraw without delay; while the victims of tyranny and violence were allowed to remain until an opportunity occurred for an amicable arrangement of their affairs by reconciliation, compromise, or some other mode. I used to take a warm interest in these details; and as such things were constantly happening, they made living in my anderoon in Teheran less monotonous than I at first found it. For though, as a woman, I was in Persia every moment reminded by some trifling incident or other of the degraded position of my sex in the East, yet I was content with the reflection of the high estimation in which my

husband's name was held; when his word was as valid as the most formal document, and when the name of Englishman was respected from Bushire to the Aras.

In Persia there is nominally a code of laws; in reality there is none. Impulse, passion, corruption, expediency, power, are the real dispensers of the law, the real arbiters of right and wrong. In such a state of society, the practice of asylum may be considered a blessing. It is the right of appeal of innocence and weakness against tyranny. The Koran does, of course, provide a code, however imperfect, for the administration of justice. But it refers chiefly to criminal cases—the law of retaliation, blood for blood, an eye for an eye. In practice, nevertheless, the administrators of the criminal law pay little regard to the ordinances of the Koran. The bastinado and a fine are the sovereign remedies for all degrees of guilt, varied occasionally with amputation of the hand or the head. The innumerable commentators of the Koran have not neglected to provide it with a most ample civil code, which is administered by the dignitaries among the Mahommedan priesthood—the kazees, moollas, moojteheds, sheikh-ool-Islams, &c. They, however, only pronounce the law: the execution of it rests with the officers of Government. From this double mode of administration some conception may be formed of the tide of corruption the plaintiff and defendant have to encounter. As, however, it is the constant aim of the Government to control the jurisdiction and influence of the clergy, it has, within a recent period, established Courts of Justice, in which a large share of civil jurisprudence is conducted. I have

not heard that any improvement in integrity has been the result of this innovation.

In all the large cities of Persia there are moojteheds, or moollas of high degree, of unimpeachable integrity, who receive the highest veneration from the people. Some among them are so scrupulous that they refuse to pronounce the decrees of the law, lest perchance they should be guilty of injustice.

CHAPTER XI.

Intense heat — Excursion up the mountains — Frightful torrent — Welcome new moon — Rigorous Mussulman fast — Rebellion — Bābeeism or socialism — Curious incident at the execution of Bāb — A socialist king — Bābee executions — Insurrection at Zenjan.

July.—THE summer drags its lazy length along, the heat increases, and our stream has dried up. The thermometer now rises to 110° in the tents; a degree of heat which, with its prostrating influence, to be understood must be endured. We therefore determined to seek refuge in the mountains to the north, in the district of Lavessan, four stages from our tents. The road being totally impracticable for wheeled vehicles, I chose a beautiful little ass for my steed. I found, nearly to my cost, that a more dangerous selection could not be made; for, unlike the horses, the asses of Persia are afflicted with a dreadful spirit of pugnacity. It was only by a most fortunate chance that mine on one occasion was prevented from rushing down a precipice with me to attack one of his kind who was braying a defiance in a field below. He was the smallest little fellow of his species, yet he never hesitated to attack the largest horses, of whom he had vanquished several. On being returned to the Persian gentleman from whom he had been borrowed, he was transferred to a moolla, whom, to the great mirth of his master, he nearly killed in one of his encounters. The

exposure and fatigue of the journey were so great that I repented of the undertaking; but on reaching our destination, we found our tents in a cool spot at the foot of a great pass, leading to a lofty plain covered with the flocks and tents of the wandering tribes, who had ascended to that cool region from the torrid plains of Verameen, near Tehran.

We passed a month in Lavessan, which is ever memorable to me, from the intolerable fright I there received. Our camp was near a deep ravine, in which ran a stream. One afternoon a storm came on, accompanied by such a deluge of rain as I never before had seen. In a few minutes the tent was filled with water, and the air became nearly dark. Suddenly a rumbling and very appalling sound was heard; it increased, it approached, it roared, and shouts and yells went forth the whole length of the valley. We rushed in terror out of the tent into the drenching rain; I, at least, ignorant of the nature of the convulsion. Down it came, bellowing and pealing like the loudest thunder. The servants and villagers screamed "Syl Amed, Syl Amed," and cries and shouts preceded its course. It was a furious torrent which had broken loose. We groped about in the dark, not knowing where to go, or from what quarter the danger had come, and floundering through the ditches. So great was our terror that the waving of a field of yellow corn, not far off, was imagined to be the torrent in full rush towards us. The person least frightened of our forlorn group was the Persian nurse, who, with the baby asleep in her arms, endeavoured to reassure me. At last, it was ascertained to have deposited itself in safety in the deep ravine, and

we ventured to return to our tents. At one time we were thinking of climbing up a tree, which would have been of little use if the mad torrent had reached us. Two of the members of the Mission had a narrow escape. Only that morning had they removed their tents from the dry bed of the stream, high up on the bank. Their horses were still picketed in the same spot; but a brave mehter or groom cut their head and heel ropes, or they would have infallibly been dashed to pieces. At dinner nobody could touch a particle of food, the gentlemen seeming to consider wine the best restorative after such a shock. In the morning I hastened to look into the ravine. It was terrible to behold, and inconceivable. Every other sound was inaudible in the mighty roar. Enormous rocks, six or eight feet in diameter, had been hurled down from the pass. The bridge had been carried away. Immense trees were torn up by the roots, and others which had previously been growing in the ravine, were snapped across like twigs. The sight alone of the ravine was fearful.

These torrents are common in Persia, though rarely on such a scale as the one I have described. The dry bed of a river is therefore not a safe place of encampment, but Persians seem generally to prefer that kind of locality.

One of the last days we spent in Lavessan brought joy to the villagers and to our servants, or, in more ambitious phraseology, brought joy from the Wall of China to Belgrade. It was the Eed e Ramazān, the eve of the feast, and closing of the fast of Ramazān. Out walking in the evening, we saw various groups peering into the sky to catch a view of the shadowy crescent of the new moon, before its rays are obscured by the darkness.

A clear evening is of importance, for if the moon is rendered invisible by clouds, another day of penance must be endured. Generally, however, some observer blessed with a feeling heart and good eyes contrives, clouds or not, to see the Queen of Night, particularly as in doubtful cases a reward follows a well-authenticated attestation of the fact. In the present instance we were, I think, the first to announce the joyful tidings, and almost at the same moment we heard the sound of the Shah's gun in Shemeran, announcing that to-morrow was to be a day of rejoicing. The Mussulman fast is a severe trial at this season. It commences before the dawn, and does not terminate until twenty minutes after sunset. Neither food nor liquid must be touched, nor, sorest privation of all, the kaleeoun or chibouk. Considering that the use of tobacco and smoking are nearly a thousand years subsequent to Mahommed, it seems to me a nice point of casuistry, whether its observance is strictly necessary according to the "Law." The fast is rigidly observed in general, particularly by the lower classes, and by women of all ranks. The latter are so peremptory on this point, in which they have public opinion on their side, that few husbands even among the freethinkers venture to infringe the fast. They know what a storm of malediction discovery would bring down upon their heads. The drinkers of wine almost always abstain during this month, taking care to give themselves ample compensation the moment the fast expires. It is on the labourer in the fields that this observance weighs most heavily. Toiling in the blazing sun, he cannot and does not refresh his parched lips, and when night approaches he is so exhausted he

cannot eat. His principal meal is just before the earliest dawn, when the fast begins. The servants of the foreign Missions are not remarkable for piety, yet, although allowable on a journey, not one of ours deviated from the injunctions of his faith in this matter. I hardly know which is to be considered as most severe, the Lent of catholics, when properly observed, or the Ramazān. In the former, liquids are not prohibited, but only a single meal is admissible in the twenty-four hours. A Mahommedan may eat and drink the entire night, if he can. The Persian women I have had in my service used to begin the night by smoking a little, then they would take tea, then eat a surprising quantity of fruit, and after their meal just before dawn would go to sleep, and sleep without intermission almost all day. It used to annoy me to see my nurses observe the fast, but no expostulation availed. "Kill me, Khanum," they used to say, "but we must fast." The mortality after the Ramazān is very great, showing how injurious it is to the health.

September 6th.—This year has been remarkable for civil and religious wars waged in various parts of Persia. At Meshed, on the eastern extremity of the kingdom, a son of a maternal uncle of the Shah had for many months raised the standard of rebellion, and sustained a vigorous siege against his sovereign's forces. It terminated in his capture by treachery, which was succeeded by his execution, and that of one of his sons and two of his brothers. A few years ago a wholesale massacre would have followed this bold rebellion, but European influence and unceasing expostulation have softened Persian manners. It is curious, though I believe true, that the English press has

had some share in producing this change. The strictures on Persian misgovernment, which sometimes appear in the English journals, are viewed with anger and alarm, particularly when the evil-doers are held up by name to public reprobation.

But a far more serious attempt at revolution has been in progress in various parts of the kingdom. Under the disguise of a new revelation, socialism and communism have made advances in Mazenderan, Yezd, Fars, and Zenjan, which would leave nothing to wish for in the aspirations of the reddest republican. Blood has flowed in torrents in crushing the malcontents, for terror and religious hate walked hand in hand. For the renegade there is no quarter in the Mahommedan code; far less when to apostasy are added the startling doctrines of universal spoliation, and, above all, of the relentless slaughter of all Mussulmans, in particular of moollas, kazees, &c. This amiable sect is styled Bābee, from Bāb, a gate, in Arabic, the name assumed by its founder, meaning, I suppose, the gate to heaven.

This celebrated person, whose real name was Syed Ali Mahommed, was born forty years ago in Sheeraz, where his father was a merchant. When fifteen years of age he was sent to prosecute his theological studies at Nejeff. Here he became acquainted with two derveeshes, with whom he was for a considerable period on terms of great intimacy. He was afterwards sent to Bushire to follow commercial pursuits, but he withdrew from society, and in a life of seclusion devoted himself to the religious exercises commonly observed by derveeshes. These mystic practices are supposed to have affected his in-

tellect. After some changes he settled at Kazemein, near Bagdad, where he first divulged his pretensions to the character of a prophet. Incensed at this blasphemy, the Turkish authorities issued orders for his execution, but he was claimed by the Persian consul as a subject of the Shah, and sent to his native place. Here in a short time he collected so many disciples around him, that imprisonment followed an investigation into his doctrines. It was debated whether he was to be treated as a lunatic, or a blasphemer and unworthy descendant of the Prophet, but his life was saved by the voice of the Sheikh ool Islam on his making a public recantation of his errors from the pulpit of one of the principal mosques. He contrived to escape from prison, and made his way to Ispahan, where many people of distinction secretly embraced his opinions. Again arrested, he was sent to the fort of Cherek, in Azerbijan, and under the infliction of the bastinado he again recanted his errors. Six months afterwards, it having been ascertained that his doctrines were obtaining rapid diffusion among all classes, he was conveyed to Tabreez, and on the day of his arrival was brought out for execution in the great maïdan, or square. This was on the point of becoming a most remarkable event, which would probably have overturned the throne and Islamism in Persia. A company of soldiers was ordered to despatch Bāb by a volley. When the smoke cleared away, Bāb had disappeared from sight. It had so happened that none of the balls had touched him; and, prompted by an impulse to preserve his life, he rushed from the spot. Had Bāb possessed sufficient presence of mind to have fled to the bazar, which was within a few

yards of the place where he was stationed, he would in all probability have succeeded in effecting his escape. A miracle palpable to all Tabreez would have been performed, and a new creed would have been established. But he turned in the opposite direction, and hid himself in the guard-room, where he was immediately discovered, brought out, and shot. His body was thrown into the ditch of the town, where it was devoured by the half-wild dogs which abound outside a Persian city. Bāb possessed a mild and benignant countenance, his manners were composed and dignified, his eloquence was impressive, and he wrote rapidly and well.

It would appear that in the beginning of his career he did not wholly reject the established forms and doctrines of the Mahommedan faith, but he reduced these to proportions so small as to be equivalent to their annulment, and thus rendered his speculations acceptable to the multitude. As his disciples increased so did his views enlarge. —— —— was acquainted with one of his proselytes, who, however, adopted the principle of never avowing his faith even to him. This man was in a respectable condition of life, and his statements were subsequently confirmed, though with some exaggeration, by a moolla of eminence, who had been converted to Bābeeism but had recanted his errors. His conversion, according to his own affirmation, had only been feigned in order to be able to dive into all the secrets of the system. It was a strange circumstance that among those who adopted Bāb's doctrine there should have been a large number of moollas, and even moojteheds, who hold a high rank as expounders of the law in the Mahommedan

church. Many of these men sealed their faith with their blood. Bāb's notions did not contain much originality. Atheism, under the disguise of pantheism, was the basis of his principles. Every single atom in the universe, he said, was actually God, and the whole universe collectively was God; not a representative of, or emanation from God, but God himself. Everything in short was God. Bāb was God, and every living creature down to each lowest insect. Death was not real—it was only another form of divinity, if such language has any signification at all. Virtue had no existence, neither had vice; they were necessarily wholly indifferent, as being portions or emanations of the Godhead. Rights of property had no existence, excepting in the equal division of all things among the godly. But this was a fiction, the real doctrine being the reign of the Saints,—that is, of the Bābees,—and their possession of the goods of the ungodly, —in other words, the non-Bābees. It was the simplest of religions. Its tenets may be summed up in materialism, communism, and the entire indifference of good and evil and of all human actions. There was no antipathy, it was affirmed, on the part of the Bābees to Christians, or to the followers of any other creed excepting Mahommedans, who, as they slew Bābees, ought to be exterminated. When the Bābee meerza was reminded of this being somewhat contrary to the doctrine of indifference of all human actions, he had no reply to make.

One of the proofs alleged against Bāb's claim to a divine mission was the ungrammatical Arabic of his revelations, which could not consequently have descended

from heaven. The Koran is regarded as a miracle of style and composition.

In the maxims of Bāb there does not seem to be a material difference from the doctrines alluded to in a former page, as inculcated by Hassan Sabāh at Alamoot. In the reign of Kei Kobad, five hundred years after Christ, Mazdak spread widely through Persia his atheistical doctrines, not dissimilar from those of Bāb. Among them was included the same principle of a division of property; and, strange to say, his creed was adopted by the monarch Kei Kobad. Nousheerwan, the son of that sovereign, put to death Mazdak, with thousands of his followers.

The present Shah shows no disposition to follow the example of his predecessor. Mazenderān, owing to its secluded position, is perhaps the province in Persia most infected with a fanatical attachment to the Mahommedan faith. It was here that, headed by the priesthood, the attack on the Bābees commenced; many hundred were slain in that province, fighting to the last, and sustaining with invincible fortitude all the barbarous inflictions which cruelty, fanaticism, and terror could invent. Scenes nearly similar, but with a diminution of cruelty and bigotry, were repeated in Fars and Yezd.

This year, seven Bābees were executed at Tehran for an alleged conspiracy against the life of the Prime Minister. Their fate excited general sympathy, for every one knew that no criminal act had been committed, and suspected the accusation to be a pretence. Besides this Bābeeism had spread in Tehran too. They died with the utmost firmness. Previously to decapitation they received an offer of pardon, on the condition of reciting

the Kelema, or creed, that Mahommed is the Prophet of God. It was rejected, and these visionaries died stedfast in their faith. The Persian minister was ignorant of the maxim that persecution was proselytism.

In Zenjan the insurrection, or the religious movement, as the Bābees termed it, broke out with violence. This city is only two hundred miles from Tehran, midway to Tabreez. At its head was a moolla of repute and renown, who, with his associates, retired into an angle of the city, which they strengthened as best they could. For several months they defended themselves with unconquerable resolution against a large force in infantry and guns, sent against them from Tehran. It was their readiness to meet death that made the Bābees so formidable to their assailants. From street to street—from house to house—from cellar to cellar—they fought without flinching. All were killed at their posts, excepting a few who were afterwards bayoneted by the troops in cold blood.

Few believe that by these sanguinary measures the doctrines of Bāb will cease from propagation. There is a spirit of change abroad among the Persians, which will preserve his system from extinction; besides which, his doctrines are of an attractive nature to Persians. Though now subdued, and obliged to lurk concealed in towns, it is conjectured that the creed of Bāb, far from diminishing, is daily spreading; at the fitting time Bāb will come to life again. There will be either a resurrection, or else his successor will maintain that his death was a falsehood invented by the Mussulmans. Whenever that day of desolation arrives, wading in blood will not be a figure of speech in Persia.

CHAPTER XII.

Ruins of Rēi — Massacre of Russian mission — The camel artillery — Excursion to Verameen — Extraordinary ruin — Rages — The Salt Desert — Wild asses — Tame asses.

October 1st.—EVERY one has returned to town, our season is over, and Shemeran is desolate; not a single tent being visible excepting those of our own camp, which we break up to-morrow to resume our old abode. I feel thankful the summer is over. The Persian autumn is still more delightful than the spring, and fortunately autumn in general is prolonged to the middle of December. The air is so pure that the animal spirits are highly exhilarated. Everything looks bright and cheerful in the dazzling atmosphere, through which objects are seen with distinctness at immense distances.

The rides and drives about Tehran are very limited. One of the most usual is to the ruins of the ancient city of Rēi, four miles from town. Little now remains of this capital, which, judging from the extent of mounds, broken walls, and other evidences of former population, must have been of great magnitude. Two towers still exist, which might have been minarets, with inscriptions on them in Cufic, as I am told; also some portions of the ancient rampart, which is of prodigious size, and various fragments of the city wall. I hear it is a city of Mahommedan construction, having been transferred from a

more ancient site thirty miles to the eastward, where the city of Rages is supposed to have existed. There is, however, a curious image carved in a rock still in a state of high preservation, which Mr. Morier considers to be a proof that Rēi preceded Mahommedanism. The city was utterly destroyed six hundred years ago by the Lieutenants of Chengeez Khan, nearly all the inhabitants having been slain. The dreadful calamities in the shape of invasion to which Persia has been always exposed, must explain in some degree the want of population. The heat of Rēi is said to exceed that of Tehran, and the insalubrity of the climate may be imagined from the Persian tradition relative to it. Izraeel, the angel of death, happening to pay a visit to Rēi in the exercise of his vocation, seeing the devastation caused by the deadly atmosphere, took fright, and fled in such haste that he forgot his slippers. Overlooking Rēi is the hill where the Gebrs expose their dead to birds of prey; and close to it is the town of Shah Abdul Azeem, famous for the pilgrimages made to it from Tehran to the shrine of some holy descendant of Mahommed of the above name, and for its affording sanctuary to criminals. This town is in truth the representative of Rēi, on whose ruins it stands, and with the hills overlooking the ruins, which are a spur from Elboorz, forms a striking object at the eastern extremity of the plain of Tehran.

November, 1850.—In driving to the gate for exercise outside the walls, I often pass a melancholy building, not far from our house, in ruin and uninhabited. It was the residence of the Russian Mission, which nearly thirty years ago was massacred in Tehran by a rising of the

people. The Minister was M. Grubaëdoff, who came to Tehran not long after the war was concluded. His demeanour to the Shah was said to have been rude and overbearing. A Georgian slave, deeply in the confidence of Fetteh Ali Shah and of the chief ladies of his haram, claimed the protection of the Mission as a subject of the Czar, and was received by the Minister under his roof. On the same plea, several women in the haram of either the Shah or of the principal nobleman in Persia, the Azof Uddouleh, a near relation of his Majesty, were demanded and removed against their own consent to the Russian Mission. Various other acts, reminding the Persians of their being humbled to the dust, took place. The indignation of the populace was aroused; perhaps it was fostered by the monarch himself. In some accidental brawl a Persian was killed. His body was carried in procession to one of the chief moollas, who issued a fetwā, a religious decree, that the Kafirs should be slain, and that the people should march to the Jehād (war for the faith). Next morning several thousand persons assembled in arms at the various mosques, and proceeded in solemn array to the house of the unfortunate Russians. The Shah was terrified at the tumult which had been raised, and which he now wished to quell, but could not. He was told that his own life and throne were at issue if he dared to interfere. The attack proceeded. The Russians closed their gates and doors, but offered, it seems, no resistance. The people mounted on the flat roof of the house, into which they made openings, and fired on the Russians below; they were all slain, thirty-six in number, I am told, excepting one attaché, who gave some



Camel-Artillery. Page 185.

of the assailants a sum of gold to spare his life; they thrust him into a small room, and told the mob that women were lying there concealed, on which they retired. The British Mission was then in Tabreez, but one of their number was immediately despatched to Tehran, and brought this Russian gentleman in safety to that city. I am told his name was Malkhof, and that he is now in the Foreign Office of St. Petersburg, and one of the most esteemed composers of the famous Russian despatches and circulars. Fortunately for Persia a war was then impending between Russia and Turkey, and the Emperor Nicholas was satisfied with an apology delivered in Petersburg by a grandson of the Shah. Since the above display of popular anger the Russians have never ventured to live in the town; their residence has always been in the Ark or Citadel, close to the Shah's palace and the Prime Minister's house. Their former dwelling has never been inhabited since that event; it now serves as a stable for the Shah's camel-artillery.

This is a very pretty-looking body of soldiers, and, to all appearance, equally formidable. They, however, bear the character of being merely a pageant, and nearly useless for purposes of war in these days. Their number is upwards of a hundred, each animal having a soldier and a small piece of artillery on its back, which carries, I hear, a ball half a pound in weight. When about to be fired, the gun is placed on the ground, resting on a swivel, though I believe it can be used from its elevated position. They accompany the Shah on journeys and on occasions of ceremony, to fire salutes. When preceding the Shah in their red housings, with kettledrums beating

and clarionets sounding, their appearance is quite melodramatic.

December, 1850.—Persia has at least one recommendation: life is very free and easy; there is not much choice of action, but, such as it is, it is free and uncontrolled. One goes and one comes; one is constantly on the move, without any particular why or wherefore, excepting that it is in some way or other a matter of course. A French gentleman in Tehran described it well when he said that it was "une vie de pantoufle." It was for some such reason that in the early part of this fine, bright, cold month we determined to make an excursion to Verameen, the granary of Tehran, thirty miles distant from the city.

The first day took us to Shah Abdul Azeem, where there is nothing to attract attention excepting the mosque. The Persians and the Spaniards seem to resemble each other in this respect. Where nothing else is to be seen, one is tolerably certain of beholding a fine church or mosque. At night we rested, according to our old practice, in a village house. Next day we reached the town of Verameen, where again we saw another fine mosque, but in ruins. It was several hundred years old, as the inscription on it declared. These ancient mosques are built in a manner to ensure duration, and their beauty consists in the taste and variety of tint of the enamelled tiles with which they are covered. The interior is decorated in the same manner, with the addition of innumerable inscriptions from the Koran, in bas-relief, of stucco or more valuable materials, as the case may be. Persian stucco lasts for ever. The dome of this mosque

offered rather a curious spectacle; it was full of pigeons, which flew round and round, and seemed either unable to descend, or to be attracted by some mysterious power. I watched them a considerable time, but still their circular evolutions continued without any apparent motive, and perhaps the magnetic influence was only destroyed by night and darkness.

Near Verameen a most remarkable antiquity still survives the lapse of twenty centuries, that is, if what we hear be true. It consists of an immense rampart, twenty or thirty feet in height, and of proportional thickness, inclosing a space of about half a mile in length and nearly the same in breadth. It is in the form of a square; the rampart is continuous, and at short intervals is strengthened by bastions of prodigious size. The whole is constructed of unbaked bricks of large dimensions, and is in a state of extraordinary preservation. The traces of a ditch of great size, though nearly filled up, are evident in front of the rampart. No buildings are found inside, where nothing is visible excepting a few mounds,—not a single habitation or human being. The solitude of this striking vestige of antiquity adds to its solemnity. It stood alone; Elboorz, distant only a few miles, gazing down on its hoary walls, with Demawend, in its garment of snow, to complete the scene. From no place have I had a finer view of this grand mountain, which seemed to lie exactly to the north. I am informed that these magnificent ruins represent Europa, a city built by Seleucus, which, if true, would make it upwards of two thousand years old. On seeing the perfect state of the ruins, and the materials of which they are composed, one feels hesi-

tation in crediting so venerable an antiquity. Seleucus chose the spot well. The district of Verameen is renowned for its fertility, though not at this period for the salubrity of its climate. The surrounding country is covered with earthen mounds, denoting former edifices, which, if explored, might reveal objects worthy of the erudition and intellect of even Sir Henry Rawlinson. My husband sent a Persian, with 100*l.*, to "dig" in the ruins of Moorghāb, the site of the tomb of Cyrus; and though I do not suspect the money to have been "eaten," nothing came of the experiment. I wish he had made choice of one of these great mounds in preference.

This district seems to have been the land of cities. A few miles to the south-east, on the edge of the Keveer, or Great Salt Desert, are other remains of vast extent; they consist of mere mounds, not remarkable for their size. Here, it is said, was the veritable Rages,—the Rages of Alexander, the Rages of Tobias, transformed, it would seem, successively first to Europa, then to Rēi, and lastly to its present humble representative, Tehran. The position, it is alleged, confirms the supposition of that great city being on this spot, which was the high road between Nineveh and Balkh. I perceive, however, in the Catholic Bible, in the Book of Tobias, that there were two cities called Rages, one being at Ekbatana; so I leave the question to the antiquaries.

It seems inconceivable that a large city could have occupied this desolate waste. Here we were in the Great Salt Desert, extending for hundreds of miles to the south and east. It is not like the honest steppes of Russia, which by culture supply all the wants of man. The

shootoor-khar, or camel-thorn, a briar on which that animal delights to browse, is the only vegetable substance that meets the eye, or that these deserts can produce. It would appear, however, that in ancient days Rages was not necessarily in the midst of desolation. The desert is of an encroaching spirit; when not resisted by population and tillage, it makes steady advances, and would swallow up Verameen, as it certainly has to some extent already, if not repelled by human labour. Rages may therefore have been in a land flowing with milk and honey.

Verameen abounds in eelyats, who in summer remove their flocks from that sultry region to the foot of Demawend. In the last century, when the tribes were the staple of a Persian army, this was a valuable consideration in the selection of a capital. When Agha Mahommed Khan chose so wretched a place as Tehran for the seat of his dynasty, no doubt he had in view that on the east, south, and west the tribes could be easily summoned to his standard; while on the north, at the city of Asterabad, lay his own tribe of Kajjar. Politically Tehran is considered to be well situated. Midway between Azerbijan and Khorassan, not too far from Asterabad and Resht on the Caspian, the Shah of Persia, who is supposed always to lead his armies, is ready, or ought to be, to oppose any invader. He is, no doubt, too far from the south, but from this point he has not much to fear. Ispahan, situated in the centre of the kingdom, was the natural capital of Persia when Turks, Affghans, and Usbeks were her only enemies. Now, however, that the Muscovite "barbarian eye" is fixed on her best provinces, the Shah must approach nearer the post of danger.

The skirt of Verameen towards the desert is said to be stocked with the wild ass, which Persians recommend as an excellent kebab, in spite of his non-cloven foot and of his not chewing the cud. But the Mussulmans have given themselves more latitude in these matters than the Benee Israeel,—asses, camels, horses, porcupines, crayfish, locusts, do not come amiss to them. The desert Arabs are even accused of not scrupling to make a meal of a lizard, when need be. At all events, they did so in former days, if we may judge by the following indignant verse of the last *Persian* king before the Arab conquest. Mahommed, having attained the zenith of his power, addressed a letter to Yezdejerd, sovereign of Persia, in which he invited him to submit, and gave him his choice of the Book, the Sword, or the Tribute. Stung to the quick at this proffer from an unknown Arab, the great king exclaimed—

Ze Shcer e Shootoor Khoorden ve Soosmàr,
Arabrà bejāee reseedeh ast Kār,
Kih taj e Kyānee koonend Arzoo,
Toofoo ber top āi cherkh gerdoon, toofoo.

Drinkers of camel's milk, eaters of lizards!
To this pass has it come with the Arab?
That he dares to aspire to the crown of the Kyanees!
I spit on thee, fickle fate! I spit on thee!"

Numerous as are the herds of the wild ass in Persia, particularly to the north of Meshed and in Kerman, the only one I ever saw was a *tame* one, which used to wander about Shemeran and often came to our camp. He was a beautiful creature, very large, but exceedingly fierce and vicious. If any one ventured to approach, he immediately got ready for battle, striking out with his fore-

foot with great force. There is a beautiful breed of asses in the province of Yezd, perfectly white, tall and stately; they bring large prices, sometimes 25*l.*, being in request among merchants and moollas for their activity and secure ambling pace. As the wild asses are numerous in the deserts of Yezd, they perhaps are descended from this stock. It is, however, the "regimental" ass in Persia which excites our admiration and deep pity. He is small, strong, and indefatigable. I hear that in each regiment of Azerbijan there are several hundreds of these animals, who carry the soldiers' baggage, as well as a great many of the soldiers themselves. I have seen a regiment marching, with their asses trudging manfully along the road, some of them well loaded with baggage, and two or three muskets on each side, besides a soldier astride, almost on the tail, his feet touching the ground. He also fulfils the part of ambulance, the sick soldiers being mounted on these personifications of patience. The powers of endurance of these poor fellows—I mean the asses—are said to be inexhaustible. Many of them are known to have marched from Tabreez to Herat, and, more wonderful still, to have marched back again.

We returned to Tehran, after having explored all the rides round Verameen, a few days before Christmas, which we kept as much as possible in the English fashion. Holly there was none, so I decorated the rooms with ivy and the few flowers left in the garden.

CHAPTER XIII.

New Year's Day — Wool! Wool! — Various kinds of derveeshes, and their ceremonies — Freedom of religious opinions — Custom of sending corpses to Kerbella — Disagreeable companions — Ali-Illāhism — Visit to the Shah's palace — Conjugal present — The Shah's sister — The deserted camel.

JANUARY, 1851.—This year opened very agreeably with a reminiscence of Europe, in the shape of tableaux vivans, given at the Russian Mission with great success by Princess ——. Only the Europeans of Tehran were invited and a few privileged Persians, who had been in Europe, and were therefore accustomed to our manners. They seemed enchanted with the groups, which were really arranged with much taste. Even trifles like these are of use in this country, for they tend gradually to effect a change in their exclusive and Asiatic modes of thinking. I cannot say the same of the waltz and polka, which although few have seen, yet they all have heard of, and which fill them with astonishment at the ladies who join in those dances.

January 15th.—"Pashm! pashm! Wool! wool!" In passing through the bazar, I had constantly remarked a wild-looking young man, so wild as to seem almost insane. He was dressed in white, with a small conical red cloth cap on his head, and a trident in his hand to mark his profession of derveesh. He was the son of a merchant, who, having spent his substance in extravagance and dissipation, had

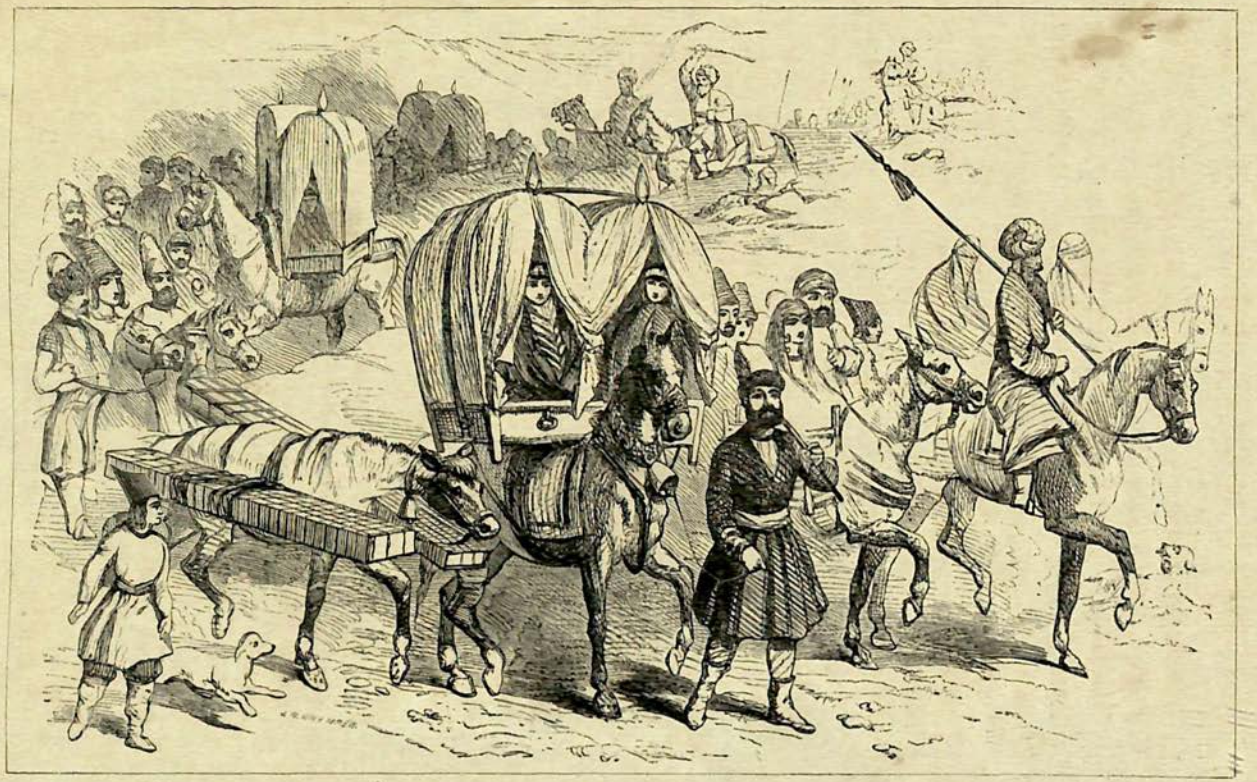
"abandoned the world," and devoted himself to idleness and derveeshism. His day was spent in roving through the bazar, exclaiming with a loud voice the above word, "Pashm! pashm!" which seemed to comprise the whole extent of his vocabulary. In this compendium of moral ethics, this philosopher tried to excite the liberality of the wealthy, and pronounced his opinion of the vanity of sublunary things—that all was "wool!" The little understanding he ever possessed seemed to be constantly under the influence of chers, an extract from hemp, which raises its partakers to ecstatic bliss while under its influence, and, like the opium-smoking of China, finally destroys all the faculties of the mind and body. Another of these worthies had adopted a very different appreciation of worldly wealth. His mode of attracting attention was to approach a passenger, and exclaim, "Hazār toomān; yek deenār kemter neh mee geeram" (A thousand tomans; I won't take a fraction less). A third used to pace up and down the bazars, vociferating the word "Aleeyan" (Oh Ali!) and nothing else. He was said to be successful in obtaining contributions. The character of these derveeshes is exceedingly low in general estimation, and yet a sort of reverence is attached to the profession. Under the pretence of abandoning the vain cares of a fleeting world, they devote their lives to idleness and the inebriation arising from chers, roving from city to city, by the orders of their moorshids, or spiritual chiefs, and levying contributions from the multitude. I have already described one mode of exaction at the Nowrooz. Another of their devices is to make use of the most fearful imprecations and denunciations of evil on those who refuse to submit

"to their extortion. Persian women, and even the greater part of the men, are seldom able to resist the weight of these anathemas. It appears that nominally they all preserve their original Mahommedanism, but that they assume to themselves such a degree of perfection as dispenses them from the observance of its forms of prayer, fasting, &c. With this creed they combine ideas of soofeeism, or mysticism, on the nature of the First Cause, his attributes, his relations with man, with matter, creation, with evil, and with good, quite unintelligible to me, and I hear even to themselves. Aiming at sublimity, they lose themselves in a bewilderment of words and ideas. Tehran is naturally a Kibleh of attraction to these successors of the sages of Greece. The Persian meerza or secretary of the Mission, who has been in England, and who is my constant cicerone, tells me that in Tehran there are seven fraternities of derveeshes, each of which has a different system with reference to the subjects above mentioned. Their names are—Ajem, Khāksār, Niāmet-oollāhee, Zehabee, Jellālee, Kemberee, Dehree. Ajem and Khāksār originated with Hassen of Bassora, who lived in the reign of the Caliph Ali; Niamet-oollāhee, which is the fraternity most prevalent in Persia, was founded by Maaroof e Kerkhee, derbān, or porter, to Imām Reza, who lived in the reign of the Caliph Mamoon. Zehabee is derived from Owēs e Kerrem (a town in Yemen), one of the early disciples of Mahommed. Jellālee springs from the pseudo-Imam, Jaafer Kezzāb (the Great Liar), who lived about 150 years after Mahommed. Kemberee originated with Kember, a black slave of Ali "Ameer il Moomeneen," the "Commander of the Faithful." Dehree is rather a system of

atheism than anything else, the name of whose founder, if it had one, I forget. Whoever desires to enter a fraternity must take some sheereenee (sweetmeats) to the chief, and say to him, "Aï wallāh, ya Moorshid tālibam" (Yes, by the Lord, O Moorshid, I am a seeker). The moorshid tells him to kiss his hand, and then those of the rest of the disciples, after which he gives the neophyte a certificate assuring him a reception among the fraternity. Some of them beg for the moorshid, others travel. For the thousand and one names of God, the moorshid imposes on the novice a thousand duties for a thousand days. Among the Niāmet-oollāhees the novice must present the moorshid, in addition to the sheereenee, with a coin called an abassee, on which are engraved the words "Lā illāh illallāh" (There is no God but God). The moorshid repeats to him an ayah, or verse, of the Koran, to be recited daily. In performing every act, the mooreed, or disciple, must meditate on the moorshid. It is lawful for him to smoke chers. Among the Zehabees it is the practice to mesmerise the novice, if it may be so called, by staring him out of countenance. They are divided into two classes, of which one abstains from forbidden things. These last assemble on Monday nights, and, sitting in a circle, they repeat Zikrs—that is, Lā illāh illallāh—for hours; they then rise and move round until they foam at the mouth and become half mad. The other class abstains from nothing forbidden. Everything is lawful. They practise neither Zikr nor Fikr (meditation on God), but they must reflect constantly on their moorshid. The Jellālees have neither prayer nor fasting. On entering the fraternity, the novice must buy food and feast the derveeshes, and

this they call the deegjoosh, or pot-boiling. After the feast the moorshid puts a piece of copper of the size of a crown into the fire until it is red-hot, and then places it on the wrist of the mooreed. Some among them have twelve of these brands on each arm. The moorshids send the mooreeds once a year on begging excursions. The Kemberees seem to devote themselves to the praise of Ali and of his wars, and of the valour of Kember. The Dehrees appear to recognize no divinity. Matter in their creed is eternal, and whatever now exists has existed from all eternity.

Notwithstanding that the government of Persia is a despotism, there is considerable latitude in the profession of religion in that country; for, however Jews and Christians may suffer from local oppression, neither the maxims of religion, nor of the common law, nor the wishes of the government, sanction their ill-treatment. With the exception of an open profession of either of the above-named religions, a Persian Mahommedan may avow any opinions he pleases. Atheism and pure deism are freely at his choice in his own circle of society. He may revile and ridicule with impunity in the above limits all systems of religion, including Mahommedanism, though of course he would suffer castigation were he indiscreet enough to profess his opinions in public. Atheism is said to be rare, but deism, it is supposed, is widely diffused among the upper classes of society. It is, however, suspected that this latitudinarianism seldom survives youth and health, and that with the approach of years or infirmity a return to old opinions is generally found. A Persian gentleman who was very intimate with the members of the Mission,



Caravan of Pilgrims, with Corpses, going to Kerbella.

was remarkable for the freedom with which he gave utterance to his infidel opinions. The simple existence of God was all he could persuade himself to admit. Being attacked by cholera, before his death he left an injunction that his body should be deposited in the holy ground of Kerbella. This is the ardent desire of every Persian, for whatever may have been his crimes, he then feels certain of an advocate who will ensure his eternal rest. Should a journey to Kerbella exceed his means, or the devotion of his relations, Meshed and Koom, the shrines of descendants of Imām Hoosscin, both of which cities are in Persia, are the next chosen spots for interment. At the latter town a woman, Fatma, not however the daughter of Mahommed of the same name, is the presiding saint. The consequence is that dead bodies are constantly travelling from one end to the other of Persia.

Not long after our arrival in Tehran, when riding outside the town, on the road to Hamadan, which leads to Bagdad, we were interrupted and detained by a large caravan proceeding to the former city. A number of the mules were laden with long narrow boxes attached upright, one on each side of the mule. A most dreadful and almost unendurable smell proceeded from the caravan. On inquiry I found that these boxes contained corpses which had been collected from various towns for a length of time, and were now on their way to Kerbella for interment. It is a revolting practice. The boxes are nailed in the most imperfect manner, admitting of the free exit of the most dangerous exhalations.

One of the gentlemen attached to the Mission, travelling between Hamadan and Tehran, arrived late at night at a village where he lay down to sleep on the sakoo of

a large stable, very much fatigued by a long day's journey. A sakoo is a raised platform at one extremity of the stable, on which travellers repose, while their animals feed around them. During the night he awoke exceedingly unwell, having passed a harassing time in fever, tormented with frightful dreams. On striking a light an unpleasant cause of his illness was discovered. He found that while he slept a caravan had arrived with a cargo of corpses, some of which, emitting a horrible effluvium, had been placed on the sakoo close to his head. A person of weaker nerves than this gentleman would have been scared on discovering who his neighbours were.

This unceasing transfer of dead bodies from Persia to Kerbella and the neighbouring shrines of Cufa and Meshed e Ali, is a heavy drain on the revenue of Persia, and a source of profit to Turkey. The stream of pilgrims in the same direction flows with equal strength, and Bagdad may be said to exist by Persians alive and dead. It is also a common practice to make dying bequests to these shrines. Moreover there are pilgrimages to Mecca and Medina which draw money into Turkey, though to a much less extent, the devotion for the tomb of Mahommed's grandson far exceeding that for the sepulchre of the Prophet himself. The Persian government has often attempted to stem this torrent of pilgrims by endeavouring to substitute Meshed and Koom as objects of popular veneration. But nothing has sufficed to quench the enthusiasm for the memory of martyrs whose sufferings are renewed yearly before the eyes of the people. Thousands still flow on of the living and the dead. The difficulties and often the dangers of the road seem to be a source of attraction to the pilgrims, perhaps because they

enhance the merit. Reckless Koords and Arabs are sometimes to be encountered, and always the extortion and reviling of the Turkish authorities and their subordinates.

A conspicuous instance of religious toleration in Persia is to be found in the existence, in large numbers, of the sect called Ali-Illāhee, which implies that Ali is God. "The Lord protect us!" an orthodox Persian exclaims, on hearing this blasphemy asserted. These sectaries seem not to differ from other Mahommedans, excepting in affirming that Ali, the nephew and son-in-law of Mahommed, is an incarnation of the Deity. This belief appears to be an exaggeration of Sheeahism, of which the foundation is an excessive devotion to Ali and his descendants. The votaries of this creed are very numerous, though chiefly, if not entirely, confined to the genuine Persian tribes of Lek descent, as contradistinguished from the Koords, who, though also reckoned as a Persian race, yet are not supposed to be of the same family as the Leks. I am ignorant whether, among the Koords, Ali-Illāhism prevails or not. Although these tenets are perfectly well known as existing to a large extent among these tribes, not the slightest attempt is made to disturb their opinions. The Ali-Illāhees, on the other hand, do not openly proclaim their dissent from the prevailing religion of their countrymen. A member of the mission was acquainted with a chief of a tribe the whole of which professed Ali-Illāhism. This khan frequently asserted that among many of his creed it was believed that Christ and Ali were the same person. He gave a list of thirty Lek tribes, with the relative numbers of Ali-Illāhees and orthodox Mussulmans; but I do not think the subject of sufficient general interest to give

a detail of their names. Being all eelyats, and therefore men of the sword, this may be one reason why they do not suffer persecution. The Sheeahs and Ali-Illāhecs of the same tribe live in harmony and intermarry.

Freedom of speech in Persia is on an equality with freedom of religion. It is the Persian substitute for liberty of the press, and the safety-valve of popular indignation. Every one may say what he likes. If needy, disappointed, or oppressed, the sufferer may seek consolation in reviling the Shah and his minister, and all their measures, to the contentment of his heart. At least until very recently he could do so; for during latter years more frequent intercourse with the Russian Mission has led to the introduction of some Russian ideas on the subject of liberty of speech. This has rather contributed to its curtailment in the capital, though in the provinces it subsists in full force. Some months after our arrival in Tehran, the Prime Minister established a newspaper; and, to ensure its diffusion in the capital and provinces, he made it obligatory on all employés of a certain rank to become subscribers. He placed the paper under the management of an English gentleman, whose duty it was to translate extracts from European newspapers suitable to Persian ideas. The "leaders" were often the composition of the Prime Minister himself, and were chiefly in praise of the Shah's government; but this practice is said not to be confined to Persia. Censure on any subject was rigidly excluded, exactly as if the 'Petersburg Gazette' had been adopted as a model. This Englishman enjoyed no sinecure; besides the above Gazette for the public, he had the superintendence of another newspaper, designed only for the eye of the Shah and his minister. The latter journal contained

all the European political intelligence deemed unsuitable for the Persian public, besides details of gossip and scandal likely to give amusement to the Shah. Such is the beginning of the free press to be established in Persia five hundred years hence; for within any less period it is hopeless.* The Prime Minister, Meerza Tekkee Khan, was a remarkable man in many respects. He had a keen desire to elevate Persia in the scale of nations, and to rescue her from what he considered the thraldom she endured from her three more powerful neighbours. Having passed his life in Persia, his views necessarily were often wrong or contracted, though he tried to remedy the defects of education and want of experience by conversation with Europeans on the system of government in the Celtic and Germanic portion of the world. He failed from want of instruments to carry out his projects, and through pride, which led him to domineer not only over the entire body of courtiers, but over the Shah himself. This pride was founded solely on his own intellectual superiority to his countrymen. His origin was very humble; but in Persia and other Mahommedan countries there is a large fund of personal equality, and obscurity of descent is not an obstacle to advancement. His father was a cook of Tabreez, who gave his son a good education, and found the means of placing him among the meerzas, or scribes, of Azerbijan. Here he rose to a high post, and, at the suggestion of Colonel S——, was nominated Commissioner in Turkey

* There are four or five lithographic printing presses in Tehran, where the Koran and the Persian classical productions are printed and sold at very moderate prices.

for the conclusion of a treaty between the two countries. Not long after his return, a new succession to the throne gave him an opportunity for the display of his capacity, and he rose to the office of Grand Vezeer, though he never assumed any other title than that of Commander of the Army. This was a whimsical distinction to confer on himself, the army having been at no time his profession. Not satisfied with this amount of prosperity, he aspired to a closer alliance with the Shah by contracting marriage with his Majesty's only full sister. This he effected, but it did not add to his power, which was already unbounded, nor did it contribute to his safety. I shall have to recount his tragical fate before the termination of these pages.

During the course of this month I paid my second and last visit to the Shah's mother. Various circumstances render it undesirable to form an intimacy with the inmates of any Persian anderoon. If it were only on account of the language they are said to be in the habit of using in familiar intercourse among themselves, no European woman would find any enjoyment in their society. On this occasion ceremony was dispensed with. After partaking of tea and coffee in her own apartment, therefore, she and all her attendants accompanied me through a variety of courts to a fine garden, where we met the Shah, unattended and alone. He conversed very agreeably for some minutes, and then came with us to the new part of the palace, of which he was very proud. Some rooms were decorated in the Persian fashion, having two rows of light pillars on each side, the pillars and ceilings being covered with small pieces of looking-glass. Some other rooms were exact imitations of European drawing-rooms; they were papered, and hanging round the walls



Nasr cod-deen, the Shah of Persia. Page 203.

were some very inferior coloured engravings. One room was fitted up as a library, having glass cases filled with manuscripts, each manuscript in a handsome brocaded cover. Here we took leave of his Majesty and proceeded to the jewel-room. I am not a judge of precious stones, so I cannot pronounce an opinion on the value of the gems I there saw. Some of the diamonds and pearls seemed to me of an amazing size, but so badly set that they did not look to advantage. From thence we went to the china closet, and there I really did feel covetous. Such magnificent jars and bowls! and apparently quite thrown away and forgotten. On our return to the anderoon the Shah's mother made me observe that the walls of the court had been recently painted in fresco. Various subjects were represented, but she paused before the one she liked best. I suppose it reminded her of some of the scenes of her youth: it was an encampment of eelyats in a green plain —goats and sheep were grazing; here and there women were to be seen, some cooking, some carrying water, and milking. "Ah!" said she, "there is a happy life—there is a charming picture." All the women joined with loud approbation in these sentiments. "Yes," said they, "life under a tent, with fine air and good water, and fresh lamb kebabs, is the best of all things." She also showed me a picture of her late husband, Mahommed Shah. She shed tears before it, and struck her breast as a sign of grief. I believe she was much attached to him at one time, until his neglect alienated her affection. She sought to render herself agreeable to him in a way which to Europeans seems extraordinary, but which is not uncommon in Persia. While living in Tabreez, when Mahommed Shah was only Crown Prince, she wrote a piteous letter to an English

gentleman, begging him to lend her a sum of money, saying she wished to join her husband, who had gone on a distant expedition and left her without funds. This gentleman believed her story and lent her the money. She, however, perhaps taking Sarah for her model, bought with it a Circassian slave-girl, whom she sent as a present to her husband, instead of going herself!

A few days afterwards I went to see the Shah's half-sister, a beautiful girl of fifteen, who lived with her mother in an obscure part of the anderoon, neglected by the Shah and consequently by every one else. She was really lovely; fair, with indescribable eyes, and a figure only equalled by some of the chef d'œuvres of Italian art. This is so rare among Persian women, that she was one of the few persons I saw in that country with an approach to a good figure. She was dressed in the usual fashion of trousers on trousers, the last pair being of such stiff brocade, that if put standing upright in the middle of the room, there they would remain. Her hair was curled, not plaited, and she was literally covered with diamonds. She was quiet in her manners and seemed dejected. She was most anxious to hear about European customs. What seemed to surprise her most was, that we took the trouble to undress every night going to bed; and she asked me, was it true we put on a long white dress to pass the night in? All Persian women are astonished at this custom, and are quite unable to account for it. They never undress at night; they untie their thin mattress from its silken cover, draw it out from its place against the wall, and roll themselves up in the wadded quilt which forms their blanket. The only time they change their clothes is when they go to the bath. If they go out to visit, they, of course,

put on their best garments, and take them off at night; but generally they lie down just as they are, and even in cold weather they wear their chadoor, or out-of-door veil, at night. This young princess afterwards sent me a piece of silk, with a request that I would allow my maid to make her a gown of it, as she wished to dress in the Feringhee fashion, to see how she looked. I felt great compassion for the poor young girl. I do not know what has become of her; but I suppose she is married to some one very inferior to herself in rank and position.

February 5th.—In taking a drive to-day outside the town, we passed a poor camel seated on the ground, who gazed at us with the melancholy look so habitual to that animal. It seemed to me he looked more distressed than usual, and on stopping the carriage to make inquiries, we found he had good reason for sorrow. He had received an injury which had rendered him useless for farther service, and his master had cruelly left him to die of hunger, the wretched creature being unable to rise and seek for food in the desert. This barbarous practice is general among Persians. All old and worn-out animals are discarded and driven out to find a subsistence as best they can: to destroy them would be regarded as inhumanity. Besides this there are some qualms lest at the general resurrection the murdered animal should take the slayer by the collar, gereebānesh begeered, and claim satisfaction. My husband used invariably to cause the old horses of the Mission to be shot, instead of following the custom of the country of selling them as packhorses, or turning them adrift to starve on the roadside. This gained him a reputation at Tehran, though not of a desirable kind. The kedkhoda, a very old man, of our village at Goolahek,

having committed some misdemeanor, he was threatened with punishment. "I dare say you will cause me to be punished," said the kedkhoda; "are you not that Vezeer Mookhtar who causes all the old horses to be shot after their faithful services: so why should not an old servant like me be punished?" Persian servants often give themselves a good deal of latitude of speech. A Persian gentleman complained that the previous night his cook made him ridiculous before a party of friends at dinner. The cookery being bad, he had sent for the cook to vent his feelings in a scolding, and told him that his dinner was like rotten dog's flesh. "Well, khan," said the cook, "if your mouth tastes of rotten dog, it is not the fault of my dishes." Every one laughed at the khan and applauded the cook. But to return to the poor camel. We went to the nearest village, where we complained of the inhumanity of leaving the camel to starve, and told the inhabitants they ought to kill it. In a moment twenty of them sallied out with their knives and daggers and killed the poor fellow, each returning with a piece of the flesh to cook for his dinner. Next day the owner came to the house and demanded the price of the camel, which had been slain contrary to the law. Wishing to see how the question would be decided, my husband told him to lodge his complaint with the moojtehed, and that he would abide by the decision of the law. Not long after a note arrived from the moojtehed, decreeing that as Colonel S—— had acted on mere presumption, and moreover, as the owner was justified in doing as he pleased with his property, he was entitled to a tenth of the value, or ten shillings.

CHAPTER XIV.

Toorkoman hostages — The banks of the Goorgan — Toorkoman horses — Easter — Chaldæan bishop — Mistaken ideas of seclusion among Persian women — Dosing of Persian doctors — Ashoorada — Successful foray of Toorkomans against the Russians—Journey to Ispahan — Dreadful heat — Kouderood — Persian beggar — The unlawful lamb — Persian pigs.

February.—AMONG the curiosities of Tehran, to me at least, were the Toorkoman women whose husbands were living in the town as hostages from the tribe of Goklan. This branch of Toorkomans resides in the vicinity of Asterabad, in the south-east angle of the Caspian. Unlike the other Toorkomans who roam in freedom between the Caspian and the Oxus, the Goklans are, from the above circumstance of their close vicinity to Persia, more or less subject to the Shah. They are, on this account, compelled to furnish hostages, to the number of forty or fifty families; but this does not prevent them from carrying their foraging excursions into Persia whenever commotion in the latter country affords a likelihood of impunity. Did we not know the Toorkomans to be one of the most detestable races among mankind, we should be disposed to commiserate their transfer from the beautiful scenery near the banks of the Goorgan, and the freedom of their alaïchigs, or felt and wicker tents, to the shocking atmosphere of their habitations in Tehran, where they are never allowed to pass the gates. However, there are periodical

reliefs, which enable them to return to their obas or encampments. Men and women are extremely disagreeable in appearance, and the women particularly so. Their faces are flat and broad, with high cheek-bones, the nose short, wide, and flat, the eyes small, deep-set, and jet-black, the complexion a tawny yellow. As they belong to the genuine Turkish race, one is astonished in comparing them with the well-looking Osmanlis of Constantinople, whose forefathers no doubt resembled these marauders. But a little reflection soon explains the change. Intermarriage with Georgians and Circassians, Koords, Arabs, Albanians, Sclavonians, Greeks, and Armenians, has no doubt modified the frightful Mongolian features of the genuine Turk. These Toorkoman women wander through the streets with the utmost unconcern, wholly unveiled. Their dress is equally remarkable and unbecoming; it consists of red narrow trousers, and a coarse red cloth coat or vest reaching below the knee, surmounted with yellow handkerchiefs on the head and neck. The character of the Toorkomans admits of as little praise as their persons. That they should be avaricious, greedy of plunder, and ferocious, is the natural result of their mode of life. But they are also reputed to be full of treachery, and ready to sell their guest at the moment of showing him hospitality in their tents. These vicious traits are not relieved by courage. A Toorkoman is a marauder, and nothing more; always ready to pillage, and always avoiding fighting as much as possible. They do, however, sometimes make a headlong charge. One of their chiefs said that on such occasions they couch their lances, bend their heads below the horse's

neck, shut their eyes, and then—Ya Allāh! forward! These ādamferoosh, men-sellers, are the bane and the bliss of Persian pilgrims to Meshed. On the one hand, they seize and carry them off for sale in Khiva and Bokhara; on the other, they help them to Paradise by the merit of the dangers encountered in visiting the shrine of Imām Reza at Meshed. Can anything more dreadful be conceived than a body of these ferocious Toorkomans dashing down at the dawn of day on a helpless village, or still more helpless caravan of pilgrims,—men, women, and children? The old and feeble are killed, the others are bound, and hastily carried off to the desert. They call themselves Soonnee Mahommedans, and on that pretext make it lawful to carry off Persian Sheeahs. Should any of their captives happen to be Soonnees, like men of conscience, unwilling to break the law, the Toorkomans beat them until they proclaim themselves Sheeahs. The goodness of their horses enables them to make forays of immense length. Formerly, when Persia was disturbed and divided, they used to make chepāwuls, or forays, of several hundred miles; but in these days they do not venture on such distant excursions, where retreat might be difficult. It is said that, after being trained, these horses can travel a hundred miles a-day for several consecutive days. Their pace is described to be a long straddling walk, approaching to a trot, which they maintain almost day and night. The rider's powers of bearing fatigue must be not far short of those of the animal. Captives in good circumstances can always ransom themselves. The sister of a gentleman of Afghanistan, a pensioner of the British Government, coming from Meshed

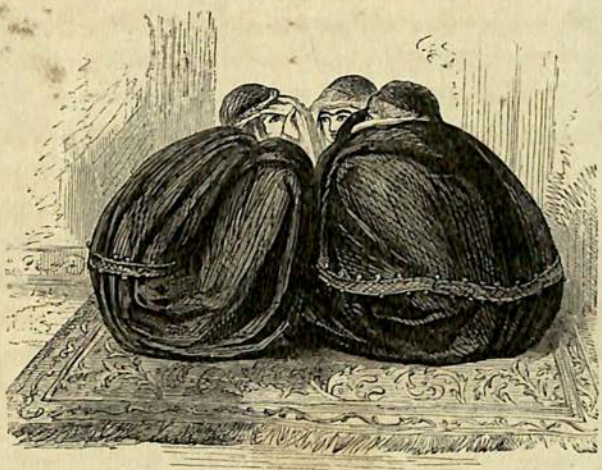
with her family, was carried off by the Yamoot Toorkomans, midway between that city and Tehran. Her release cost 500 tomans, about 250*l.* Had she not been ransomed she would certainly have been sold in Khiva. I have frequently seen at the gate of the Mission very poor-looking men with long chains suspended from their necks. This was a signal that sons or daughters had been carried off by the Toorkomans, whose release they were endeavouring to purchase by collecting alms. The Goklans are a comparatively small tribe, of about ten thousand tents or families, and live surrounded by enemies. On the north are the Yamoot Toorkomans, dwelling on the rivers Atrek and Goorgan; on the east are the Tekkeh Toorkomans; and on the south is Persia. The two former tribes are very powerful, and both wage constant feuds with the Goklans; but the Toorkomans never sell one another. The Goklans are, however, a compact, united tribe, dwelling in a strong country, and maintain their ground well. These marauders sometimes carry their boldness to such a length as to seize people close to the ramparts of Asterabad—nay, even occasionally within the walls—and carry them off to the desert.

March. — Nowrooz and the other festivals passed exactly as the year before, and were therefore deprived of any interest, from the absence of novelty. Our own religious festival of Easter was approaching, and it was time to think of that solemnity. One of the inconveniences of Tehran to a Catholic family was the want of a clergyman of that church, whom we consequently were obliged to send for from a distance. On one occasion, a French gentleman of the order of Lazarists had travelled

five hundred miles to Tehran at our earnest desire, and after some time returned the same long journey to Salmas, in Azerbijan. At another time, a Catholic Armenian clergyman, who had been educated at Rome, came from Ispahan to oblige us; and on a third occasion we were indebted to a bishop of the Chaldean Catholics in Azerbijan, who came from Tabreez, four hundred miles, to render us spiritual assistance. The bishop was a man of strikingly imposing and dignified appearance; he had formerly been Patriarch to the Chaldean Catholics in Moosul, from which place he had been transferred to Azerbijan. He too had been educated in Rome, and spoke Italian perfectly. To us, who had been always accustomed to hear Mass said in the Latin language, it was strange to listen to the service in old Armenian, which not even the Armenian congregation who attended at our chapel understood, and in ancient Kaldanee, or Chaldæan. It will surprise some English people to hear that Latin is not the universal language of Roman Catholics in their religious ceremonies; but any one who on Twelfth Day has been in the Church of the Propaganda in Rome will have seen Mass celebrated in Coptic, ancient Greek, Syriac, Armenian, Chaldaic, and other old tongues, which, like Latin, have now ceased to be the colloquial language of the people. This Chaldean Bishop did not seem to be filled with charitable sentiments towards his brethren of the Nestorian faith, particularly towards the clergy of that community. Being himself a man of education, he was at no loss for opportunities of ridiculing their ignorance, forgetful of their seclusion in the mountains of Koordistan, and of what he himself would have

been had not his good fortune sent him to Rome. In worldly wealth this successor of the Apostles was very primitive; one of his flock acted both as servant and clerk, and a small remuneration was a sufficient inducement for undertaking the long and fatiguing journey from Tabreez to Tehran. His revenue was entirely derived from the voluntary contributions of his flock; and even this scanty source of subsistence had recently, owing to some disagreements, ceased. The "voluntary system" is certainly not a thriving one in the East, whether for Armenians or Chaldæans, Catholic or otherwise. I have never seen a clergyman of these communities who did not seem to be in extreme poverty excepting at Tabreez, where the presence of wealthy Armenian merchants secures for their priesthood a comfortable subsistence. There are very few Catholics in Tehran, and the greater part of these were Europeans. Our congregation seldom exceeded from ten to fifteen people. (E.)

April.—My residence here has thoroughly dissipated my English ideas of the seclusion and servitude in which Persian women are supposed to live. Bondage, to a certain extent, there may be, but seclusion has no existence. Daily experience strengthens an opinion I had formed of the extent of the freedom in which they spend their lives, particularly whenever I pass the door of the physician to the Mission. Jealousy, at all events, does not seem to disturb Persian life in the anderoon, or to form a part of the character of Persians. The doctor's door and house are crowded with women, of all ages and of all ranks, from princesses downwards, who come to him to recount their ailments. It seems their applications for



Persian Women seated on a carpet gossiping outside the Doctor's door.

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succour are often founded on most frivolous motives; gossip rather than physic being frequently their object. Sometimes, on the other hand, they seem to think all the diseases of Pandora's box are concentrated in their persons, when in reality they are perfectly well, but still insist on being "treated." A princess in the streets of Tehran is as little distinguishable as a peasant, which enables her to consult her medical adviser without any recognition of her rank. The dreadful practice of the Persian doctors is quite enough to drive the fair dames of Tehran to an English physician. I am told they give the most nauseating draughts, in immense quantities, to their patients—two or three quarts at a time. Then they divide all maladies into cold and hot, which are to be attacked by corresponding opposite medicines. Thus a hot disease is to be combated by a cold remedy. The classifications of these last are somewhat fanciful. Pepper, I know, is "cold," and ice, I think, is "hot." It can hardly be otherwise than hot, for it is applied to the stomach in large pieces during cholera. It must be admitted, in extenuation of the freedom allowed to themselves by Persian ladies in their medical visits, that a physician is a privileged person in Persia. The anderoon seems open to him. Husbands and brothers, in company with their wives and sisters, used to sit in their anderoon with our "hakeem sahib," gossiping and chatting as gaily and freely as they would do in Europe. It is a pity that these cheerful Iranees are so far off; they would otherwise soon become Feringhees. With all their alacrity to endure a life of roughness, or even hardship, they have a vast aptitude for luxury and enjoyment; which may be

regarded as the high road to civilization. Their wants are increasing daily, and these wants must be supplied from Europe.

May 1*st*.—To the great dismay of all the courtiers the Shah has resolved to undertake a journey to Ispahan. The unpopularity of the movement is general and reasonable. The courtiers are expected to accompany his Majesty without receiving any compensation for the heavy expense they must inevitably undergo. The camp of a king of Persia on a journey resembles that of a large army. There are cavalry, infantry, artillery, bazars, and camp-followers innumerable. Each of the courtiers has a large retinue of servants, mules, led-horses, tents, &c.; and he lays in a store of tea, sugar, tobacco, spices, and other edibles, as if he were undertaking a voyage of discovery in some unknown region. This arises from the nomadic habits so prevalent throughout the nation. A tent feels to them like a house and a home; and in a sauntering journey, like that of the Shah of Persia, they love to travel luxuriously.

We, too, prepared with regret to swell the pomp of the royal camp. The daily increasing heat, and other circumstances, made me heartily desire to remain in Tehran; but the Russian Mission having resolved to accompany the Shah, the English Mission could not show his Majesty less respect; and I thought it preferable to brave all the discomfort of the journey rather than remain in the solitude of Tehran.

The Shah, intending to reach his destination by a circuitous route, had already taken his departure from Tehran, when intelligence arrived from Asterabad which

excited alarm, amazement, and ridicule. In the island of Ashoorada, at the south-east angle of the Caspian, the Russians have a naval establishment for their ships-of-war, when cruising in the above portion of that sea. They seldom have at this station less than two or three vessels of their military navy, whose occupation is ostensibly confined to the coercion of the neighbouring Toorkomans. This coercion, it may be presumed, is exercised with no light hand over these marauders. These Toorkoman Vikingrs belong to the tribe of Yemoot, and, by means of their boats, commit depredations on the Persian coast, carrying off men, women, and children, with every other description of booty. Not being permitted to maintain a navy on their own sea, the helpless Persians are forced to have recourse to Russia for protection. The Toorkomans, smarting under a control so foreign to their habits, and annoyed by the deprivation of their usual pillaging excursions, determined to have revenge. It was a bold thing of these half-armed barbarians to think even of contending in their open boats with the steamers and soldiers of Russia; nevertheless they ventured, and in the execution of their plan they showed a keen appreciation of the character and habits of the Russians On Easter eve, or Easter night, when every Muscovite is supposed to be engaged in libations of thanksgiving for release from his rigorous fast, they landed in a creek of the small island, and immediately made their onslaught on the Russians living on shore. No resistance was made—perhaps the advanced stage to which their festivities had been carried admitted of none—so, at least, it was currently said at Tehran. Some Russians were killed and

wounded, and ten or fifteen persons, men and women, were carried into slavery by the Toorkomans, who returned without delay to the mainland. But the amazing and amusing part of the affair was the conduct of the war-steamer lying in the harbour. Not the least attempt was made to succour the beleaguered party on shore. She got up her steam and rushed about the harbour, firing her guns at everything and nothing. The Persians said that she, too, was evidently as drunk as the crew. This humiliating blow from a few half-armed barbarians has made the Russian Mission look very grave, dignified, and menacing. The occurrence is alarming, too; for no one thinks it will remain long without a sequel, as these Yemoot Toorkomans are nominally Persian subjects, or at least claimed as such. In their lively, bantering manner, the Persians protest that the whole transaction—attack, slaughter, and capture—was got up and instigated by the Russians themselves, as a prelude to further encroachments. But we must commence our journey to Ispahan, and leave Prince —— to decide the matter with his "auguste maître."

Kouderood, May 21*st.*—We quitted Tehran on the 11th, and have got over only half our most fatiguing journey. On leaving the city the thermometer was at the very endurable temperature of 75°; but the moment we entered the tents it rose to 95°, and daily increased. This sudden change was overwhelming. I never suffered so much; and every one seemed equally depressed. Our mode of travelling, too, augmented greatly the discomfort and fatigue, but was absolutely necessary with reference to the servants and horses. We started every morning at

three o'clock, and halted at about seven or eight, when the sun was overpowering; then recommenced our journey at about four o'clock in the afternoon. It was impossible to sleep during the great heat of the day; and often the nights were so hot that the only moment one could repose was the cool hour when we were forced to rise.

The person most to be pitied, however, was our unfortunate French cook. After mounting his horse at three in the morning, and reaching the tents at seven or eight, he began his operations for breakfast. Whether he ever rested at all I do not know; but the first object I used to see on arriving at our encampment for the night was poor Dunkel, cooking dinner in the open air, with a few unburnt bricks for a kitchen-range. It certainly was "désolant," as he himself used to say. An Englishman would have gone distracted under such circumstances; but the Frenchman was a philosopher.

Our road lay through the district of Savah, by a constant but imperceptible descent. The city of Savah is situated in a burning plain where the soil is impregnated with salt, and, like nearly everything in Persia, is in complete decay. We were now advancing into the centre of the great province of Irak. No part of Persia seems to be without clans and septs; for here, too, and in the adjoining districts, several Toork tribes are resident. A wonderful race of conquerors were certainly the Turks. Half the world at one time or another seems to have fallen under their dominion; and not only did they achieve, but, more difficult still, they often contrived to preserve their conquests. Good sense and courage seem to have been

the special qualities of the race. Even at this day it is possible to distinguish between the Toork and Lek, or genuine Persian tribes, by the countenance. The former is almost invariably marked by gravity, and often by uncouthness. The Lek is wild, and frequently ferocious in countenance. He has a keen and hungry look about him that reminds one of a tiger-cat.

The heat at last became so excessive, and I and others felt so exhausted in consequence, that we took refuge in this village, or rather encamped near it, to recruit our strength in its more elevated position. This is the great advantage possessed by Persia over other hot countries. In few places is it out of one's power to ascend from a hot, burning plain to a delightful yeilāk, where one is revived by comparatively cool breezes. We have now been here nearly a week, and are, I am sorry to say, to leave it in a day or two. Our tents are pitched close to a clear stream, near a grove of olives, and there are a few large trees overshadowing us. On a hill near us are the ruins of some old castle, which looks very picturesque. The ground is covered with wild flowers and aromatic herbs; and our olive grove is filled with nightingales. Frances and Crab spend their day paddling in the stream; and, altogether, I feel sure any change we make will be for the worse.

Sultanabad, May 25th.—We have left pleasant Kouderood, and have again descended to the same scorching atmosphere as before. This town is placed as usual in a plain bounded by hills; but in this instance the plain was fertile, covered with cornfields nearly ready for the sickle. The town looks more thriving than customary,

owing, perhaps, to its containing several manufactories, or rather looms, for making silk.

I was a good deal struck by the conduct of a beggar, very old and decrepit, who approached our camp, loudly demanding charity. I sent him some pence, which he sent back with an indignant message, that "Pool e seeāh nemee-geerem" (I am not in the habit of accepting black (copper) money). This was the more curious, as a silk-weaver, passing by the tents, in answer to our inquiry, said that his wages were threepence a-day. This sum appears surprisingly small, particularly as almost every Persian is married; but the price of food is on a corresponding scale. I question if the extreme cheapness of Persia be owing to a great redundancy of food, and suspect it may rather be attributable to a scarcity of money. Still food is abundant: bread is generally twopence for 6½ lbs.; mutton a shilling for 6½ lbs.; beef fivepence for 6½ lbs.; but such beef, invariably an old cow, fit for nothing but to die! This brings to my mind a circumstance which gives an idea of the kind of animal considered fit for food by Persians. Our butler, Mahommed Agha, came to me in great haste, and said, with much solemnity, "Khanum, your fattest lamb wants to make himself unlawful, therefore I propose to kill him at once." It appeared the poor lamb was very ill, and about to die, and that to make him lawful food his throat should be cut. Persian phraseology is sometimes curious. One day Agha Hassan, our head groom, came to me and said that my horse had become my sacrifice. He had been ill, and this was his mode of announcing the catastrophe of his death; the meaning being that my misfortunes had de-

scended on the head of my poor steed. The groom had kept a pig in the stable with the horse, for the purpose of rendering the same service to the latter, but he could not avert fate. This is a common practice in Persia; and it is interesting to watch the friendship which springs up between the pig and the horse.

These domesticated wild pigs are peculiar in their attachments. There was an English consul at Samsoon who kept one of these animals, which used to accompany him out shooting, and, I believe, did all the duty of a pointer. He was miserable apart from his master. Whenever the latter paid a visit to the Pasha or the Cazee, he naturally declined to allow his pig to accompany him. The pig, however, was certain to ferret him out, and present himself, equally regardless of the feelings of the true believers and of the confusion of the Consul. These inconvenient demonstrations of affection cost the poor pig his life. The ungrateful Consul put him to death. Before finishing with pigs, I must mention another anecdote relative to their wonderful power of scent. A member of the Mission was once chased two or three miles open-mouthed by an immense half-starved pig over hedges and ditches, walls and canals, and barely escaped with his life. He had a piece of ham in his pocket, which the pig's potent olfactories had discovered. Every one knows that the flesh of this animal is forbidden to Mahommedans, and that, in general, it even excites their disgust. Yet they sometimes overcome their antipathy. An English gentleman happening to receive a present of a wild boar, a prince of the blood royal insisted on dining with him, with the proviso that the dinner was to consist solely of

pig. Accordingly pig in all possible shapes appeared at table. There was roast pig and boiled pig, fried pig and grilled pig, and pig's head and pig's feet, of each of which his royal highness and one of his brothers freely partook.*

These dissertations upon pigs have drawn us away from the fertile plain of Sultānabād. With all its salt and sand a large portion of the soil of Persia is clayey and good, and requires water only and population to fertilise the plains. The want of good government has dispersed the population; the want of population has dissipated the water, that is, ruined the kanāts; and the want of water has converted three-fourths of the country into barrenness. I begin to conceive that ancient Persia may have been peopled in a high degree.

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* There is no reason for concealing that the giver of this eccentric feast was the former most excellent physician of the Mission, Dr. Charles Bell. Few men have enjoyed so distinguished a reputation for medical knowledge in Persia as this gentleman, to which his abilities well entitled him.—J. S.

CHAPTER XV.

Plain of Gilpaëgan — Melon-fields — Various travellers in Looristan — The manners of the Loors — Derveesh Ali — Khousar — Ispahan — Former splendour and general decay — Shah Abbas's Hall of Audience — Persian frescos — Felicity of the pigeons — The Armenians of Julfa.

GILPAËGAN, *May 27th.*—To reach this city from Sultānabād we were, according to custom, forced to cross a high pass. One would be disposed to imagine that Persia, which is a succession of natural fortifications, would, of all countries in the world, be best able to resist the progress of a foreign enemy. Yet few nations have suffered more from the aggressions of invaders than this. From all time Assyrians, Scythians, Toorks, Greeks, Romans, Arabs, Turks, Afghans, and Russians have made it their battlefield.

Our only incident hitherto has been a deluge of rain during two hours, which speedily filled the tent with water a foot deep. I sat on the table as the only secure place for some time; but I was conveyed from that disagreeable harbour of refuge luckily just before the ponderous tent fell bodily like a log. Gilpaëgan is an extensive and most fertile valley. Grain is so cheap in this part of Persia as to have almost only a nominal value; and unfortunately there is no mode of exporting it unless by mules, which is too expensive a process for a distant market. I often think what a different country this would

be if it were intersected by good roads, waggon-roads even, instead of the mule-tracks which now form the communication from one city to another. A large portion of the revenue of Persia is paid in grain, which, consequently, in Central Persia is not a profitable arrangement for the Government. I remember hearing in Tehran that the Shah had paid his gholāms, or personal guards, by assignments on the grain revenue of Gilpaëgan, Melayer, Mehellāt, and other places in the centre of Irāk. His Majesty's paymaster-general estimated the grain at the Tehran price; but when they arrived at the spot they found themselves obliged to sell it at less than a quarter of the sum. The expenses of the double journey left only a pittance of their salary.

The town of Gilpaëgan was in a more than ordinary state of decay. An impression was made on me of this place by a present of a camel-load—really an ass-load—of roses. They had no stalks, and were tied up in a large cloth. As soon as it was untied the sweet perfume filled the whole tent, and attracted Frances, who sat down in the midst of the fragrant heap, and would have made a pretty picture with the roses scattered on her head and lap. I am told that in this part of Persia, and in Kermanshah, melon-fields are to be seen three or four miles in length, and a mile and a half in breadth. I really believe there is no exaggeration in the statement.

On entering the valley of Gilpaëgan we had noble views of the glorious mountains of Looristan, the abode of a genuine Persian race, the worst and most ferocious robbers throughout the land; for the Toorkomans cannot be considered denizens of Persia. Their poverty and

their barbarism are equal, and their own clan-feuds interminable; otherwise it would be impossible for the more peaceable population of the plains to live in their neighbourhood. The mountains were covered with snow, looking grand and solemn, and exciting a lively desire to penetrate their fastnesses. Forty-five years ago two English officers, named Capts. Grant and Fotheringham, who were sent by Sir John Malcolm to make investigation into the state of Looristan, were both murdered by the tribe of Feilee. Other Europeans have travelled hastily through the territory of these tribes, whose forefathers, in all likelihood, partook in the expedition of Xerxes, and who themselves probably preserve the manners and state of society of those days. But the distinguished author of the 'Antiquities of Nineveh' has had the rare fortune of passing some time among these mountaineers, and it is to be hoped he will reveal the result of his experience.

Europeans have been, no doubt, deterred from penetrating the almost inaccessible haunts of these lawless mountaineers, either by the danger, or by the want of objects of curiosity to compensate for the risk. Yet there is an attraction in examining a state of society so unlike our own, where there is little or no law, and where personal freedom is carried to the verge of dissolving the bonds of society. This is the state of civilisation in which Toorkomans and Loors exist. Every man is his own protector, and allows himself the fullest liberty of action, knowing at the same time the penalties of trenching on the similar rights of his neighbour Toorkoman or Loor. A nearer examination generally dispels the visions one

may have formed of these supposed unsophisticated beings, passing their lives in the solitude of their mountains, engaged in the care of their flocks and herds. The unveiled display of intense avarice, of poverty, squalor, ferocity, idleness, and tyranny among the men, toil and slavery among the women, soon displays the naked reality, and disgust succeeds sympathy.

Mr. Riach, formerly physician to the Mission in Persia, made a journey through these mountains with a caravan many years ago. The journey from Kermanshah to Desfool occupied eleven days. The population along the road was nearly all residing in tents, and had every appearance of the greatest poverty, which prevents them from procuring arms, otherwise the country would be impassable. Clubs and stones are their weapons. The travellers never ventured to undress to go to bed on this march, so imminent was the danger of an attack of the Loors. The state of society was such, that old clothes, needles, pepper, and salt were better than money for procuring necessaries. He describes the Loors to be "handsome, strapping, ferocious-looking fellows, and far from civil."

It is strange that in these savage regions Mr. Riach should have found the ruins of the "finest bridge he had seen in Asia." The two extremities rested on rocks three hundred feet apart, and thirty or forty feet above the level of the stream. The few arches remaining were supported by pillars of great size, and the span of one of them was not less than sixty or eighty feet, and eighty or ninety feet in height, the whole formed of hewn stone. Who can have built this?

More than twenty years ago another Englishman lived among these tribes. He assumed the character of a Mussulman and derveesh, and called himself by the name of Derveesh Ali. So well did he personate the character that on one occasion he appeared at Tabreez before several English gentlemen, and exclaimed "Hoo, Hak!" with such emphasis and discretion, that until he addressed them in English his disguise was not detected. In his peregrinations through Looristan he had taken a Loor wife, whom he afterwards found it convenient to exchange for a donkey. Derveesh Ali was a very eccentric person, and passed many years of his life in wandering over the East in the above disguise.

I have seen extracts from a journal of Derveesh Ali, from which the following passage will illustrate the state of society in Looristan:—

"In Looristan proper there are no houses. Half the year the people live in the higher mountains in arbours formed of twigs and bushes, the other half is spent in tents below the mountains in the germseer, or hot region, during winter; six months of the year they live on acorn-bread, steeped in mud to remove the acrid taste. Saw a girl, sixteen years old, reaping corn in a field, in the dress of Eve before the Fall. Gum arabic, gum mastic, and gum tragacanth abound in these mountains; also sulphur and bitumen. The lower range of mountains towards Desfool is covered with large oak-trees, fit for ship-building, which might be floated down the Kerkha, and thence through the marshes to the Tigris at Shat-el-Had."

Colonel Rawlinson, Colonel Williams, and Baron Bode

of the Russian Legation in Persia, are, it is said, the only other Europeans who have visited these mountains.

Khonsar, May 30th.—From the hot valley of Gil-paëgan we were delighted to reach this cool spot. The town of Khonsar lies chiefly at the bottom of a deep ravine, and therefore does not partake of the cool breezes we enjoy, for we took care to pitch our tents on the high land. Judging by the climate we found, I conjecture the cold must be exceedingly rigorous in winter, on which account, perhaps, the ravine was selected as the site of the city. The town is of great length, and is pretty. The valley is narrow, full of fruit and other trees, which, to the exclusion of tillage, seem to occupy all the care of the inhabitants; it is closed on both sides by very high mountains.

Ispahan, June 15th.—We were four days reaching this renowned city from Khonsar. For miles before approaching its walls the country was covered with corn-fields, melon and cucumber fields, vineyards, and orchards of all the fruit-trees produced in Persia. Whoever wants to know what Ispahan was two hundred and fifty years ago can consult Chardin, who says it contained six hundred thousand inhabitants, and was twenty-four miles in circumference. Now the population is supposed to be under one hundred thousand—an estimate to which its untenanted and deserted streets give credibility. Its capture one hundred and thirty years ago by the Afghans, who committed great ravages, commenced its downfall, which was completed by the transfer of the seat of the monarchy to Sheeraz and afterwards to Tehran. The Ispahanees bear the reputation of being the most intelli-

gent and industrious, as well as the most effeminate and timid, among the inhabitants of Persia. The inconceivable subjugation of their city, when it held five hundred thousand souls by a body of twenty thousand Afghans, is a confirmation of the latter portion of this character.* Still enough remains of fine bridges, mosques, beautiful avenues of plane-trees, and crumbling palaces, to attest its former greatness. It enjoys the inestimable and in Persia the rare advantage of being situated on the banks of a fine river, which covers its immense plains with abundance and fertility. Its desolation and lonely, silent streets, make a deeper impression than even the mouldering ruins of its departed grandeur. We pass through stately bazars of immense length utterly tenantless; not a human being in them: yet even now Ispahan continues to be a place of considerable trade and manufacture, and contains many wealthy merchants—all the great roads of Persia from every quarter concentrating at this spot. Its silks, velvets, brocades, satins, chintzes, arms, and lacker-work, bear a high reputation. The climate has a character superior to its merits, the heat being very great and the odours overwhelming.

September.—It would be superfluous to describe the curiosities of Ispahan in palaces, gardens, and so forth, when they have been already so ably depicted by such writers as Morier, Porter, and Fraser. Besides this, the

* The palm of timidity is disputed by the Kashees, or natives of Kashan. A body of soldiers from this city, being permitted to return from Tehran to their homes, made a petition to the Shah that a few of his ghoolams, or personal guards, should be ordered to see them in safety through a dangerous defile near Tehran. This is a popular anecdote illustrative of their reputation.

prodigious heat and exhaustion arising from a residence in a house nearly open, with an aspect only to the south, had fairly worn me out during our abode of nearly three months, and prevented me from undertaking extensive researches. Add to this the circumstance of her Majesty's subjects having received an increase a month after my arrival, and my lack of enterprise will appear excusable; still I cannot forbear from recalling to remembrance the splendid maïdan, or square, of Shah Abbas, and the equally splendid mosque at one extremity of the maïdan, to the gate only of which we were allowed to penetrate. The inspection of some of the palaces of that monarch, who appears to have built all the palaces, and caravanseras, and everything else of note in Persia, gave us great pleasure, and I am happy to say that some attempt is now made to rescue and to preserve them from ruin. The building which made most impression on me is the large hall of audience called Chehel Sitoon, or forty columns. Besides an unbounded supply of looking-glass, gilding, and paintings on the walls and ceiling, this hall contains several frescoes representing Persian royal life two or three hundred years ago. The colours are vivid, and the execution by no means despicable. I caused some of them to be copied on a reduced scale, which I preserve as souvenirs of Ispahan. In one of these paintings Shah Tamasp, who reigned three hundred years ago, is represented entertaining his refugee guest from India, Hoomāyoon Shah; the courtiers are seated around, dancing-girls are performing, and wine and drinking cups are not wanting. In another, forty years later, we see Shah Abbas himself seated with the Turkish ambassador,

evidently at a drinking-party. The Turkish and Persian courtiers are seated on each side, whereas the present etiquette inflexibly requires them to stand with folded arms. The attendants are looking on from behind, and dancing-girls occupy the foreground. It is evident that the debauch has made considerable progress. In one corner we see a man prostrate, very drunk, holding the wineflask to his mouth; while another of the carousers, in a shocking state of intoxication, is borne away in the arms of the attendants. But we do not see the brave Sir Anthony and Sir Robert Shirley, who often partook of the orgies of this monarch. These were two Englishmen who entered the service of the Shah, and who, by their ability and military qualities, raised themselves to high favour. I have been told that these two gentlemen were among the first, if not the first, Englishmen who entered the Persian service. Hanway says that in those days the English residing in Ispahan were numerous, and lived with a magnificence amounting to extravagance. In the present day it would be difficult for a numerous party of Englishmen to find subsistence in Ispahan, much less live there in splendour. The Suffavee dynasty of monarchs seem nearly all to have been devoted to wine, and to have indulged in this propensity without scruple, careless of the opinions of their subjects. Perhaps their subjects partook with more freedom, or at least more openly, than at present of these forbidden enjoyments. From these paintings and from the memoirs of Sultan Baber, the founder of the Moghul dynasty in India, and a devout worshipper of the wineflask, we are able to judge of the habits of Asiatic royalty in those days.

Persia is decidedly the country for men of good luck, enterprise, and intrigue to choose for a career. Obscurity of birth, as before said, is no bar to advancement, nor does it prevent the "right man from being in the right place." In this point, at least, Persia has a superiority over England. The late Prime Minister was a schoolmaster; I have already mentioned Meerza Tekkee Khan's descent; the Governor of Ispahan was once the latter's menial servant, and a previous Governor was the son of a small greengrocer in the same city. This last was a man of great capacity, who raised Ispahan to a high state of prosperity; and the present Governor, if not possessed of the same rare abilities, is a man of moderation and firmness, who rules the people with equity, and pays the Shah his share of the revenue without undue peculation. Ispahan is beginning to recover from the deep ruin into which it had fallen. Its remaining edifices, as I said before, are protected, its commerce is improving, and the merchants are becoming wealthy. A continuance of the present moderate system of government, aided by the wonderful fertility of the soil, will ere long restore to this ancient city a share of the prosperity it once enjoyed. The late and the reigning Shah have often formed schemes for establishing their capital here, but reasons of state have hitherto prevented this desirable change from being carried into execution.

Ispahan is the land of promise for pigeons; they swarm like locusts, and not only are never eaten, but are highly cherished and thrive accordingly. Their residences, high, malakhoff-looking towers, painted white, dot the whole country, and these buildings are evidently

objects of great care—much more so than any other edifices.

We resided in the quarter of the Armenians, which is separated by the Zayenderood from the Mahommedan city. It has received the name of Julfa, in memory of the town near Nakhshewan, from which these Christians were forcibly conducted by Shâh Abbas. Their number was then estimated at twelve thousand families, which are supposed to be now reduced to six or eight hundred. Notwithstanding their thrift, the Armenians have participated in the general decay of Ispahan. They have been reduced to great poverty: one sees the streets crowded with young men, sauntering, or seated at their doors, without any employment. They go to India in great numbers, where they are distinguished for their habits of industry. After a few years' exile they return with a competence to their native land to spend the remainder of their days.

Their spiritual chief is a bishop, nominated by the patriarch at Etchmiatzin, near Erivan, consequently a Russian subject, like his colleague at Tabreez. This Bishop of Julfa visited us more than once during our stay in Ispahan. His appearance and manners were highly dignified and agreeable, and he was evidently a man of education—very different from the unfortunate Armenian clergy of Persia. We heard that he was in despair at the ignorance and clownishness of his clergy and flock, not one of whom did he find to be a suitable associate. He consequently lived in solitude. We heard also that the worthy Bishop condemned himself rigorously to abstain from wine, lest his life of solitude should seduce

him to the habits of inebriation to which his co-religionists are often addicted. At his breast he wore a beautiful cross of diamonds and emeralds, and by its side a decoration of the same materials surmounted by the double-headed eagle, showing clearly whose subject he was.

The conventual system exists among the "orthodox" Armenians, as they designate themselves. At Ispahan there is a convent containing six or eight old and exceedingly ugly ladies, who used occasionally to visit me. They were evidently extremely poor; their residence was inconveniently close to us, as I used every night to hear their loud summons to matins by knocking a mallet on a piece of wood.

We also found here a small community of Catholic Armenians, presided over by a venerable gentleman called Padre Giovanni, who, originally from Angora, had been educated at Rome, and had afterwards devoted a large share of his life to the care of his humble flock at Ispahan, where, soon after our departure, he died.

It happened that, attending Mass on one occasion at his church, service was performed in old Armenian by a Catholic Armenian clergyman. To our surprise, and to the consternation of our Irish servants, we found that part of the congregation consisted of the wife and three daughters of the officiating clergyman. They were ignorant, and we had forgotten, that the discipline of celibacy among the priesthood is not applicable to the secular clergy of the Eastern churches of the Catholic faith. I hear, however, that marriage is allowable only before ordination.

In former days the Jesuits and various other orders

had each their establishments at Ispahan, and I believe that at this moment there is ground in that city claimed as belonging to the French Government, in virtue of some immunities conferred two or three hundred years ago on French ecclesiastics. Padre Giovanni and his small flock were then the representatives of all these establishments, the names of whose occupants crowd the enormous cemetery to the south of Julfa.

There is great similarity between the two Armenian churches, "orthodox" and Catholic. I do not know whether this title "orthodox" is one assumed by themselves or conferred by Protestant American writers. I believe it is the latter. The ceremonial in regard to the use of vestments, incense, candles, veneration for pictures, but not images, representing sacred subjects, holy water, the sign of the cross, and similar minor observances, is much alike in both creeds. In doctrine the great difference seems to be the disavowal of the spiritual authority of the Pope by the Armenians, their rejection of certain general councils, and a disagreement from Catholics, as well as Protestants, in the procession of the Holy Ghost. They also acknowledge only one nature in Christ, and anathematize all who dissent from this doctrine. It is on this account that they are considered as schismatics in the Church of Rome. Transubstantiation, baptism, confession, and the remainder of the seven sacraments, are alike in the two churches. Purgatory is nominally rejected; still masses, prayers, and alms are offered for the dead. They communicate in two kinds, —by dipping the bread in the wine. As in the Catholic Church, the bond of matrimony can be annulled

only by death; they also admit the efficacy of good works.

The fasts are most numerous, far surpassing in number and rigour those of the Roman Catholic faith: they exceed one hundred and fifty days in the year; meat and fish of every kind, with eggs, milk, butter, cheese, are excluded from consumption on these days. It is said, moreover, that the Armenians are rigid in the observance of this ordinance.

The practice of covering the mouth, even in their houses, seems to prevail among Armenian women everywhere. They live, especially the married women, in a state of seclusion much more severe than that imposed on Persian females. A woman, for years after her marriage, is not allowed to see her nearest male relations. She lives in complete silence for a long time, and conceals her face from even her husband's father and mother. They are, in fact, menial servants; their ignorance is extreme, it not being considered prudent to give them any education. Though much fairer than Persian women, their appearance is exceedingly coarse; their countenance often possesses a wonderfully crimson hue, not, however, of an agreeable tinge, as it reminds one too strongly of the source from which, if fame does not slander them, it is often derived. They have the reputation of indulging sometimes in the deep potations to which the Armenian men are habitually addicted.

I have been told that there is a striking uniformity in the character of Armenians in all parts of the world—at least in the East—Persia, Turkey, Russia, and India. It possesses some qualities calculated to attract regard, and

the inflexible tenacity with which the Armenian has clung to his faith during centuries of persecution claims respect. He is a model of frugality and self-denial, excepting, it must be avowed, when he encounters the temptation of the wine-skin. With little to boast of in point of honesty, he nevertheless exceeds the other natives of the countries where he resides in these virtues. A most keen and indefatigable trader, Tartary and China are the limits of his commercial enterprise in the East. His hatred to the profession of arms is extreme. It may be doubted if the recent concession in Turkey of the abolition of the kharāj, or poll-tax, will be a boon to this real "peace party" in the East. In Persia, I am satisfied, the Armenian would rather pay a double poll-tax than be a soldier. Oppression has made him timid and cringing, yet, with all his defects, the Armenian is certainly an improvable person, willing to adapt himself to the progress of civilization.

It is remarkable that in the vicinity of Ispahan there is a district called Feraidoon, inhabited by Armenians, who form a complete exception to the above remarks. They are courageous, warlike, and always ready to appeal to arms in their unceasing feuds with their neighbours the Bakhtiarees.

The uniformity observable in their characters exists also in their features. Their faces are large and full, with prominent hooked noses, rendering them extremely like the sons of Israel in countries where the fine countenances of the latter are not deformed by oppression. The appearance of the women has been described in a previous page.

The industrious habits of the Armenians make them valuable as Rayas or Ryots in Turkey and Persia. In both countries, particularly in Turkey, a Mahommedan landlord much prefers that his tenants should be composed of Armenians rather than Mussulmans. As far as my husband's observation extends, the treatment of Armenians and other Christians in Turkey is more just and moderate than in Persia. This remark does not, of course, extend to the Turkish Koords, whose treatment of the Nestorian Christians is infamous. It is not that a Persian is less tolerant than a Turk; on the contrary, in many respects he is more so; but he is more covetous and grasping, more profuse and extravagant, and the law is weaker in Persia than in Turkey.

Russia, too, seems to place an equal value on an Armenian population. In her last wars with Persia and Turkey, she inveigled many thousand families of this race from Tabreez, Erzeroom, and the adjacent districts into Georgia.

CHAPTER XVI.

Mussulman nurses — Three various modes of counting time in Persia — Retribution for the Russian festivities on Easter Sunday at Ashoorada — Partial abolition of the importation of slaves — Negroes in Persia — Condition of slaves in Persia — Return to Tehran — Bastinado — Punishment of a general for being defeated.

OUR residence at Ispahan afforded an instance of the general diminution of religious prejudice among the Mussulmans, even in places where, like that city, there were no Europeans resident, from whose opinions they might take example. I had been recommended not to engage a nurse from among the Armenian women, who, owing to the food they are forced to have recourse to in consequence of their rigid fasts, or from some other cause, are considered unhealthy. I therefore sought one among the Mussulman women. No sooner were my wants known than a number of applicants appeared. Some years ago a sort of compulsion would have been necessary to induce a Mahommedan woman to undertake the office. They came to our door accompanied by their husbands, and then entered alone. They seemed perfectly indifferent at their faces being seen by Englishmen. Some among them were not poor, their object seeming to be to secure a protector or patron. The fact of quitting their family and home to accompany strangers like us to Tehran was no impediment, although they were to be perfectly alone; but the reputation of the English for probity and

the faithful performance of engagements stands high in Persia. Even when the certificate of the term and nature of service was sent to a cazee for registry, not the least opposition was made. The young woman whom I hired was very poor, and full of anxiety to obtain the situation. Seeing another candidate make her appearance, she became very much excited, and protested, with the usual Persian oaths, that if she were deprived of her office of nurse to the little vezeer mookhtar, as she styled the child, she would instantly fall upon her rival and chastise her severely.

She accompanied us to Tehran. I have had a good deal of experience of Persian nurses and their children, for they always insist on having one of their elder children with them. "Khanum," they used to say, "I cannot live without Khatoon (or whatever the child's name was); she is the light of my eyes." Notwithstanding this apparent affection, if their children were troublesome they would rush at them and pinch them until they were black. One day I heard a great commotion in the anderoon, and on going in some alarm to see what the matter was, I found that these women were discontented with their pillao and were threatening to beat the ferash who brought it to them. When they are in a passion they tear their hair and scratch their bosom with their nails until the blood comes. It was curious that, young as my daughter Frances was, when she tried to signify her indignation at anything she wished for being withheld, she used to imitate exactly what she saw the nurses do, and put up her hands to tear her hair, and sometimes knock her head against the wall. These women were very exact in their devotions;

at daybreak they would rise, perform the prescribed ablutions, and unwrapping a stone that had been brought from Kerbella, placing it carefully towards Mecca, they went through the usual form of prostration and prayer; this they repeated three times every day. To amuse themselves during the day, one would sometimes beat the tambourine and the other dance. They could hardly sew their own clothes; indeed, the greater part of their time was spent in sleeping, which is a mode many women adopt of arriving at the degree of embonpoint thought becoming. They used to go once a week to the bath, and come home painted, and their hands and feet as well as their hair dyed. I think they felt a secret contempt for me in consequence of my doing a good deal of needlework, which they thought an undignified proceeding on my part. One of them accompanied me as far as Constantinople on my way home, and would, I think, if I had wished, have come on to England.

The Shah did not arrive in Ispahan until two weeks after we reached it. He delayed here and there on the road to beguile some of that time which Persians find to hang so heavily on their hands. Time is of no value in Persia, from which reason it must be that so complicated a system has been maintained as that of counting by solar time, lunar time, and the Toork cycle. The first is observed by astronomers, and was in general use in Persia until it was superseded by Mahommed's lunar year. It consists of twelve months of thirty days each, with the required number of intercalary days. The second, which is now in general use, consisting of three hundred and fifty-four days, is therefore perpetually

changing: an event commemorated in one year will come round ten days earlier the succeeding year. The third is a curious method of counting introduced by the Toorks into Persia, but which I am told has been forgotten in Turkey. They divide time into cycles of twelve years, each year having a separate name, but they have no designation for the cycles. Thus, if they wanted to describe an event which happened sixty-five years ago, they could only mention the name of the fifth year. These years are solar, and are thus designated:—

Sichkan eel	..	..	Year of the	Mouse.
Ood eel ..	..	..	,,	Bull.
Bars eel ..	..	..	,,	Leopard.
Tavishkān eel	..	..	,,	Hare.
Looee eel ..	..	..	,,	Crocodile.
Eelān eel ..	..	..	,,	Snake.
Yoont eel ..	..	..	,,	Horse.
Kooee eel ..	..	..	,,	Ram.
Beechee eel	..	..	,,	Monkey.
Tekhakoo eel	..	..	,,	Cock.
Eet eel ..	..	..	,,	Dog.
Tenkooz eel	..	..	,,	Hog.

It seems strange their number should be twelve, as if there were a zodiac of years instead of months.

This method of marking time is preserved only in government documents, such as firmans, grants, &c. No one seems able to account for its origin, excepting that, according to tradition, the Toorks of old brought it from Tartary.

To return, however, to the Shah,—he arrived full soon enough to swallow a very bitter pill. The day of retribution for the Toorkoman attack on Ashoorada had arrived.

Some of the attachés of the English Mission, in riding through the streets, met the whole of the Russian Mission, excepting the Minister, proceeding to the Prime Minister's house, in the unusual display of full uniform. Their countenances betrayed the solemn importance of their intent. The Russians love effect and theatrical representation at least as much as the French. These gentlemen had gone in a body to claim satisfaction for the success of the Toorkomans, and for the imbecility of the Russian commander: that satisfaction was the dismissal of the Prince Governor of Mazenderan, as the instigator of the outrage. The Shah's brother was to be the scapegoat of the Russian commander; the penalty of refusal was the immediate departure of the Russian Mission from Persia.

All the court, all Ispahan, exclaimed against the iniquity of this demand. The prince, they said, was governor of Mazenderan, not of Asterabad, besides which, he had every motive to conciliate, not to irritate, the Russians; the harsh conduct of the Russians was in itself, it was added, a sufficient provocation to the Toorkomans; at all events let there be an investigation, and let punishment follow proof, not assumption. All was useless. The man was very sick indeed, and must submit to the prescription of his physician. In fine, when a weak, remote, unfriended nation, like Persia, has the misfortune to be neighbour to a powerful one like Russia, where one man's will is supreme and irresponsible, it must often be content to bow down in humiliation before pride, policy, and caprice. It must bend to avoid being broken. The prince was recalled, and the universal conviction of the injustice of the blow made it more deeply felt.

No evil is without alloy, and so it may be said of the recall of the Prince Governor of Mazenderan. For a long time various attempts had been made to induce the Shah's government to put a stop to the importation of negro slaves from Africa by the Persian Gulf. They are conveyed in Persian and Arab vessels to the Persian ports. The authority of the government over its subjects on the coast of that sea is very imperfect, and in fact merely nominal. Consequently the only efficacious mode of stopping the traffic, is by allowing the right of search, and the removal of the slaves to English ships of war. But this concession had been strenuously resisted. A week after the forced recall of the governor of Mazenderan, this boon was granted for a certain number of years. Thanks be to the Russian government, to whom the negroes of Zanjibar ought to be grateful.

There are three kinds of negro slaves in Persia, who are named Bambassees, Nubees, and Habeshees. The former come from Zanjibar, and the neighbouring country in the interior, but I do not know the derivation of the name. The others, as their names imply, are natives of Nubia and Abyssinia. The Bambassees, who are genuine negroes, are in great disrepute as being ferocious, treacherous, and lazy. The Nubees and Habeshees, excepting in being black, do not present the usual negro characteristics. They are highly esteemed as being mild, faithful, brave and intelligent, and are generally confidential servants in Persian households. Ill-treatment must of course sometimes take place when there is unlimited power on one hand, and entire submission on the other. The fact is proved by the occasional instances in which slaves have

taken refuge in the Mission to escape from punishment by their masters. Still it is believed that in general, cruelty, or even harshness, is rarely practised towards slaves in Persia. Their customary treatment is similar to that of the other servants of a family, or even something better, particularly when they happen to be Nubees or Habeshees. They are never employed as field labourers, their occupations being confined to the duties of the household. It is probable that in the anderoons more suffering is inflicted on the women slaves than is endured by the men. Caprice and idleness are unsafe guardians for human beings of an inferior race, when there is no "Times" to denounce and correct the wantonness of power. On the whole, however, the lot of slaves in Persia is perhaps as favourable as that institution will admit of. They are not treated with contempt as in America; there are no special laws to hold them in a state of degradation; they are frequently restored to freedom, and when this happens, they take their station in society without any reference to their colour or descent. White slaves frequently rise to the highest employments, but these are commonly captives taken in war. It is said not to be easy to make an estimate of the number of slaves imported annually into Persia from the Red Sea and Zanjibar. They certainly are not numerous, judging by the few to be seen in the streets of the large towns in the north of Persia. In those of the south they are doubtless in greater numbers, and particularly in the low, level tract bordering the coast, of which Bushire and Benderabbas are near the extremities. The difficulty of forming a correct calculation on the subject, arises from the practice of each petty chief in the Persian Gulf being

an importer in his own vessels, and from the slaves being landed at a variety of small harbours extending over a great length of coast. The number is supposed not to exceed two or three thousand annually, of whom a great many die after leaving the hot region of the Persian coast.

Another source for obtaining slaves for the Persian market, is by means of the pilgrims to Kerbella. These slaves are conveyed directly across the desert from Mecca or Medina to Bagdad, to which latter city the pilgrims always resort. The Persian Hajees also on their return from Mecca often make purchases of one or two negroes. A few also are brought by the route of Damascus, but taken collectively the importation of slaves to Persia by these routes is insignificant, and its cessation or continuance is entirely dependent on the will of the Turkish Government.

On the 1st of September we commenced our return to Tehran, whither the Shah had already been gone a week previously. The Russian Mission had anticipated the Shah's movement in apprehension of the difficulty of procuring food in the event of following the royal camp. From Ispahan the regular road is by Cashan and Koom, but we, from the same reasons as influenced the Russians, retraced our steps to Khonsar, and from thence we went to Mellayer and regained our former road to Sava.

Not a single incident occurred to vary the monotony of the road, excepting a trait of Persian manners. Our camp was joined by a Persian gentleman, who had formerly held a very high post in the Shah's service, but who was now in disgrace. Late one night we heard at a considerable distance a noise resembling deep moaning, accom-

panied by a heavy, sustained sound, at short intervals. These unpleasant symptoms of distress having continued some time, we found on inquiry that the Khan, our travelling companion, a stanch disciple of Bacchus, had quarrelled with his cook, whose feet he had put into the fellek, and was now giving him a sound bastinado. It is hard to say how long the punishment would have continued, whether one or two hours, had not we caused it immediately to cease. The fellek is a long, stout piece of wood, each end of which is held by a ferash; the culprit's ancles are attached to two loops in the middle, and he is thrown on his back, by which means the soles of his feet are turned towards the sky. Two ferashes then flog him on the feet with long thin wands, which are renewed from time to time. The punishment inflicted in this way is sometimes most dreadful, lasting for hours it is said, but no one dies in consequence, though the patient often faints under the infliction. Some years ago no rank was exempt from this chastisement. The Shah constantly caused it to be inflicted in his own presence on delinquent governors. In the last Russian war the Asof ood Dowleh, a nobleman of the highest rank and a cousin of the Shah, suffered this punishment in the public square of Tehran, for having sustained a defeat from the Muscovites. As a homage to his rank, a carpet was spread on which he was placed, and the first blow was struck by the Shah's son, Abbas Meerza, the heir to the throne.

When the Khan was called to account for the breach of etiquette he had been guilty of in inflicting punishment in the Vezeer Mookhtar's camp, he amusingly alleged that it was done solely out of respect to Colonel S——, his

cook having had the effrontery to say that our cook had taken the whole of the fowls in the village. These Persians are very strange people; they are ever on the watch to discover each other's intrigues, falsehoods, and finesses. A movement of the finger, a turn of the eye, is not left unnoticed, and receives an interpretation. Yet each man invariably thinks that his own plots and intrigues are the acme of human ingenuity, wholly unfathomable by the rest of mankind. How often have I heard the Persian secretaries of the Mission preparing little paltry schemes, which the dullest understanding could unravel, for arranging insignificant matters, in which all that was necessary was to tell the truth, and all the time thinking they were performing the cleverest and most impenetrable feats of diplomacy. The credulity of Persians, on the other hand, is also sometimes unaccountable. Knowing the chicanery and falsehood of their countrymen, they again and again go on believing and trusting each other to an incredible extent. When an aggrieved person is asked what induced him to put faith in the offender, his general answer is, "he swore a vast number of oaths; I said to myself, perhaps he is telling the truth." They have odd names for describing the moral qualities. Sedākat means sincerity, honesty, candour; but when a man is said to be possessed of sedākat, the meaning is that he is a credulous, contemptible simpleton. Much in the same manner a man of dashing courage is called deewāneh, which means mad.

CHAPTER XVII.

A night alarm — The new Vezeer — The old Vezeer — His wife — Manner of his execution — Return and marriage of his widow — Armenian wedding — The Elchees from Arabia, Khiva, and Afghanistan — Refugee Afghan Khans — Excursion to Demawend — The "Sublime Well" — Defile and Eelyats — Town of Ask — Hot springs — Mountain chiefs — Ill-advised change of residence — Lareejanee women — Lareejanee lady governor — Persian breakfast — Jonas Hanway's account of Mazenderan — Return to the "Sublime Well."

November, 1851.—WE were alarmed late one night, not long ago, by my husband being aroused to receive a letter which one of his Persian friends had written to him. As I was never perfectly exempt from disquiet in Persia, my first impression was that either the Shah had been murdered, or that the Russian Mission was about to be attacked, perhaps our own. The letter was not free from alarming contents. It contained an announcement that the Shah had ordered the attendance of 400 of his Gholams, or personal guards, and that all the courtiers had been summoned to the palace at that unusual hour. What could have happened? What was impending? Had a conspiracy been discovered just on the point of explosion? In an hour another letter arrived: all this preparation was directed against one man. The Shah had seized Meerza Tekkee Khan, his Prime Minister and brother-in-law. His Majesty was a very young man, only one-and-twenty, and such was the ascendency acquired by intellectual vigour, that he did not venture on the dis-

placement of his minister without anxiety and precaution. And yet this minister, I hear, governed well. He had faced and resisted, sometimes perhaps injudiciously, the two lions, between which, as a former Persian Vezeer had said, that meek lamb, Persia, was placed; he had improved and increased the army, the finances were thriving, and economy was the order of the day, to the great increase of his own personal enemies. But he made the usual mistake of degrading the Shah into a cipher. He even spoke of him with contempt, often styling him Een Pisèreh, this young fellow. This could not last beyond a certain time, though the catastrophe happened sooner than was anticipated.

The intrigues to gain the vacant prize immediately began. Who was to win?—was it to be a member of the English or the Russian party or faction? The Shah, notwithstanding his inexperience, made a most wise selection. He fixed on a man of great talent, fully conversant with the affairs of government, and, it may be added, with the intrigues of Persian court life. But there was one difficulty. His Majesty had formerly spontaneously placed Meerza Agha Khan, whose title was, the Ittimad ood Dowleh, the Trusted of the State, under English protection; and he felt that if the future Vezeer were to preserve this safeguard, the minister would ere long become the real monarch. His Majesty adopted a Persian and summary method of settling the affair. He shut up the Khan in the royal palace for three days, and told him to take his choice between being Grand Vezeer to the Shahinshah, the King of Kings, or a hanger-on of the English Minister. The Khan was, or pretended to be, in a

dilemma. He sent a message to the Mission asking for advice. The answer was, that English protection was preferable to the Crown of the Kyanees itself, but that as the Khan was clearly determined to be Vezeer, he had better decide at once. The Shah's choice has been well justified. The Sedr Azem has ceased to be English without becoming Russian, and is perhaps as fully a Persian as a Persian can be. He governs with prudence and popularity, never forgetting that the Shah is supreme. The present war has been a trial of his inclinations and his wisdom. Notwithstanding a variety of inducements, religious and political, to avenge on Turkey many wrongs and insults, he appears to have maintained the difficult part of neutrality with impartiality and success.

The fallen Vezeer, Meerza Tekkee Khan, the poor Ameer, met his downfall with resignation and composure, though with sadness, for he knew the fate of a Persian minister whose overthrow is followed by imprisonment. He made a false move, and forfeited his life. The Persian government had placed him of their own free will under the protection of Colonel S——, or rather of the British Government, and arrangements were made for his maintenance in honour and luxury in a neighbouring city, and of course in safety. Misled by promises from other sources, the Ameer cast off his English protection at the very last hour, and refused to depart at the time and to the place arranged. The sources relied on failed him at his need, and abandoned him in a position worse than before.

It was now resolved to send him to Cashan, there to be imprisoned. His wife, the Shah's sister, a young woman

of eighteen, resolved to accompany her husband, in spite of the dissuasions of her brother and her mother. Conjugal affection does exist in Persia after all. A few days afterwards, as we were driving outside the walls of the town, I unexpectedly approached within a few yards of a party travelling towards Ispahan. It was the Ameer and the princess. They were both in a takhterewan, surrounded by guards. It seemed to me like a funeral procession, and I have seldom beheld a more melancholy sight. I longed to open the carefully-closed takhterewan, to take the doomed Ameer and his poor young wife with their two infant children into the carriage, and to drive off with them to the Mission-house.

I may as well anticipate his fate. He remained for several months in confinement at Cashan with the princess. As a security against poison, that exemplary lady made it a rule to partake first of all the food presented to the Ameer. In the mean time his enemies had not been idle. They feared lest he should one day be restored to favour. The Shah's ear was daily filled with the danger of leaving alive a man like him, who only waited for an opportunity either to destroy his sovereign, or ruin the kingdom. Who the murderers were I shall not disclose, but at length the fatal order was sealed, and dispatched in charge of the Shah's Ferash Bashee, a man whom the Ameer had raised from the dust, and a party of Meerghazabs. For some reason, which no one but a Persian can understand, recourse was had to guile. A lady of the haram was sent to the Princess, telling her to dry her tears, for that the Shah had relented, and that the Ameer was to return to Tehran or go to Kerbella, the usual haven for Persians who

have lost court favour. "The khelat or coat of honour," said she, "is on the way, and will arrive in an hour or two; go, therefore, to the bath, and prepare to receive it." The Ameer all this time had not once ventured to quit the safety afforded by the apartment of the Princess, and of her presence. On hearing the joyful news, however, he resolved to take the advice of this woman, and indulge in the luxury of a bath. He left the Princess, and she never saw him more. When he reached the bath the fatal order was revealed to him, and the crime perpetrated. The Ferash Bashee and his vile crew presented themselves, and the choice of the mode of death was given to him. It is said he bore his fate with patience and fortitude. His veins were opened, and he at length expired.

Though every one feared and some expected this catastrophe, all Tehran was struck with horror at this act. The Shah was not much blamed, but the instigators, high as was their station, were execrated as murderers. The patriotism evinced in the earnest desire of the Ameer to elevate Persia was remembered, and his faults were pardoned. As for me, I felt so indignant that I only wished to quit a country where such crimes are sanctioned by the Government, and committed without remorse. Remorse, I believe, is unknown in Persia. Shocking acts are perpetrated, and one never hears of any uneasiness of mind on the part of the perpetrators. Suicide is quite unknown, and insanity is nearly equally so.

The Princess, widow of the Ameer, was brought back to Tehran by the woman sent to ensnare her husband. I had never before visited the former, that model of a Persian matron; but soon after her return to Tehran, I

lost no time in waiting on her Royal Highness to show my respect for her noble and most unusual conduct. Contrary to my expectation, and to my disappointment, her mother was present, so I soon withdrew; as etiquette prevented the princess from opening her lips. She was plainly dressed in a kind of mourning. She was pretty, and looked more like a stout girl of twelve years old than the mother of two children.

As I have often said in the course of this volume, the Persians are a strange people. Not long after the return of the Princess, she was compelled by the Shah to marry the son of the Prime Minister. This afforded an opportunity to the joke-loving Iranees to say that the Shah's sister was transferable like the Grand Vezeer's signet-ring of office, and that whoever took the one must take the other.

December.—We have had a wedding in the Mission. An English gentleman in Tehran married an Armenian lady, and to prevent any mistake as to its validity, there being no Protestant clergyman in Tehran, they determined to perform the Armenian rite under the auspices of the English flag. Three priests "assisted" one another in the performance of the ceremony, most of which seemed much like our own. The bride and bridegroom knelt down and were covered with a shawl. The priest placed a large open book on their heads, out of which he chanted prayers for a considerable time; they then drank wine out of the same cup, after which they were released from their hiding-place, and saluted each other as man and wife. At the déjeuner which followed immediately after, the bride (although it was her second

performance in that character) and her maids, were too bashful to appear; so they sat on the ground in my room and solaced themselves with tea and pipes, while the husband was busy in replying to the numerous toasts proposed in honour of the lady by the Englishmen of the party. The Armenians must have been much surprised at this custom, but I dare say would have gone on drinking the bride's health till next morning, provided the supply of champagne held out. After the breakfast the bride and bridegroom walked down the avenue of our house arm in arm, according to Armenian etiquette, to the astonishment of the Persians who beheld them. It is considered an outrageous breach of decorum for a lady to lean on her husband's arm, so I always carefully avoided doing so. At the gate they mounted their horses, and went home, the gentleman preceding, as the nobler half, and the lady followed by a train of mules carrying the whole of her household goods.

February, 1852.—If an Englishwoman were able to partake more freely in the society that Tehran affords, she would find living in that city less monotonous. Elchees, or envoys, from time to time arrive from distant countries, who usually visit the Mission, but I am excluded from seeing them, although I should have liked very much to listen to these semibarbarous ambassadors. Among the late arrivals was an Arab Elchee, who styled himself the Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of some Arab potentate. He and his followers were a wild and rough looking party, yet quite different from Koords, Loors, or Toorkomans. He had sufficient diplomatic knowledge to be very careful of his own interests. Three

minutes had not elapsed after entering the room before he asked my husband to make him a present of a watch, and when informed that his watches were limited to the one he wore, the Elchee avowed his disbelief of the assertion with perfect candour.

Another personage of the same kind was the Elchee from Khiva—slave-buying Khiva. There was a window where unseen I could observe these novel visitors as they approached the house. The ambassador was a fat and florid, round-faced man, who, were it not for his unmistakeable little peering eyes, would have strongly resembled a native of Germany. But this Uzbek, like all other genuine Toorks of pure blood, could not conceal his race. He sauntered up the avenue precisely with the gait of a duck, with great dignity and grace. All Orientals seem to consider this waddling movement highly imposing. At all events it gave me time to scrutinize and to covet the beautifully embroidered silk robes which formed the ambassador's garments.

The Elchee presented to Colonel S—— a magnificent letter from the Khan his master, in which he styled himself the Sultan of Kharezm and Shadow of God. It was fully a yard in length and not much less in breadth. This epistle was a curious specimen of gilding and paint, and was enclosed in a sumptuous bag of gold brocade. The extraordinary country in which he lives made him an object of interest, and I am besides grateful to his Excellency for the present of an immense tiger skin, the original owner of which had been shot in the desert near Khiva. This was novel intelligence to me, who had imagined that a tiger required a climate approaching to

that of the torrid zone to enable him to exist. In Khiva, on the contrary, the cold is so intense as to freeze completely over the great river Oxus. Living in their distant oasis, surrounded by nearly impenetrable deserts, the Khivans carry on their iniquitous barter of Persians with the Toorkomans in security. Nevertheless Nadir Shah one hundred years ago contrived to reach and to subdue Khiva in spite of her deserts. They formerly maintained a similar trade in Russians kidnapped by the Kirgheez, and Kara Kalpak, and Kazzak wanderers in the deserts on the north and north-east of Khiva. But the fear of another expedition like General Perowski's, which took place fourteen years ago, has relieved Russian subjects from this direful fate. Thousands of Persians, either actual captives or their descendants, are supposed to languish in hopeless slavery. It is only another invasion like Nadir Shah's which offers them any prospect of release, and of this there is no chance: Nadir had the spoil of Delhi at his disposal, and the present Shah has too many engagements nearer home to engross his attention. Their only prospect of relief is from Russia, and I am told that, judging from the positions she has taken up on the Jaxartes, near its mouth, from whence she will one day be able to threaten Khiva, Bokhara, and Kakan, she seems disposed to realize it. (F.)

Among other diplomatic visitors were the Elchees from Herat and Candahar on the part of their respective rulers, Yar Mahommed Khan and Kohendil Khan, and subsequently from the son of the former chief, Saeed Mahommed Khan. These however I never saw.

They did not visit at the Mission, as it did not suit the policy of their masters in their then subject condition to Persia to avow any cordiality towards the English. I hear Persia plays her part with some cleverness in this quarter of the world: she seems never to allow these two states to remain in quiet, in which design she is mainly aided by the native restlessness of the Afghans. Since the death of that clever and enterprising but wicked chief, Yar Mahommed Khan, who maintained himself in independence in Herat, the Persian government has sustained his imbecile son Saeed Mahommed Khan, whose days were consumed in intoxication. Thus Herat fell virtually under the control if not into the hands of the Shah. Murder upon murder of the Afghan chiefs ensued, in which Persia was more to blame than the mock ruler of Herat.

These Afghan Elchees are always accompanied by a numerous retinue. It is a pretty sight to see a body of Afghan horse in movement—they crowd closely together in a promiscuous compact body, moving rapidly forward at a slouching gait, which their horses seem able to preserve for a considerable time without apparent effort. Instead of the tall black cap of the Persians, the Afghans wear turbans; they have a wild and peculiar look, which makes them easily distinguishable from the other natives of these countries. Their manners are said to be far less polished than those of their Persian neighbours; the state of civilisation, too, in Afghanistan being on a far lower scale than that of Persia. The Afghans boast of their freedom, and ridicule the subjection

of the Persians to their monarchs; to our ideas, however, their freedom is of a nature scarcely desirable, consisting principally of a power to do evil, rather than of institutions for the benefit of society: directly the reverse of our definition of liberty—"to use your own so as not to hurt another." Assassination, the Persians say, is the daily pastime of the chiefs and nobles of Afghanistan, and according to their light way of talking, an Afghan is only a bad Persian, more false and more venal, a man who pauses at no crime or baseness in pursuit of his own schemes of selfishness or aggrandizement.

Several Afghan Khans took sanctuary about this time in the British Mission. A number of Herat chiefs opposed to their imbecile ruler had been sent by Saeed Mahommed Khan to Persia to remain in the custody of the Persian Government, which undertook the honourable office of Meerghazab, and caused many among them to be put to death, or, to speak more truly, to be murdered. Some were brought to Tehran, where they found means to get within the Mission premises. I of course saw nothing of these refugees, but I heard they were not in the least prepossessing. Our sympathy for the fate of people in their condition is moderated by the conviction that a reversal of position alone is wanting to make them act with similar cold-blooded ferocity. As the permanent residence of these chiefs in the Mission was out of the question, Colonel S. according to his usual practice made an arrangement with the Prime Minister which enabled them to leave their sanctuary with impunity. (G.)

July.—Summer in Persia, as I have already described, is most wearisome, but this year was a more

than ordinary trial during our period of banishment. In Persian metaphor Izraeel, the Angel of Death, had brandished his sword though he did not strike. The result was our being obliged to undertake a journey to the mountainous part of Mazenderan, to try the effect of the mineral waters at Ask. The distance was trifling, not above eighty miles, but, from the nature of the country it was necessary to pass through, the journey was formidable to an invalid. Though the road was in a great measure over mountains, we were fortunately able to proceed fifty miles in a carriage, to the neighbourhood of the town of Demawend. This charming and secluded valley is an amphitheatre three or four miles across, filled with cultivation and fruit-trees. I could not help regretting that the Shah had not fixed on this beautiful spot for his yeïlak, or summer residence. But his Majesty seems impervious to heat, the hottest sun not preventing him from going out hunting. Not a trace of ruins is to be found in Demawend, although among Persian traditions its antiquity reaches the fabulous days of their history—those of Kaïomers and Jemsheed. Although the great mountain derives its name from this valley, it is not visible from Demawend, owing to the vicinity of lower hills. Near the valley we found a charming spot for our tents, large trees, a delightful bit of grassy ground, and a glorious fountain which gushed out of a rock in a foaming volume of water. It was called Cheshmeh Aalā, the Sublime Spring. The remainder of the road being over precipitous mountains and rocky defiles, we resolved to leave our young children here under charge of two English womenservants and

some Persian attendants. Here they lived in perfect tranquillity until our return, which was not before four weeks. I record this in favour of our servants and of the villagers. Persian servants in a house are absolutely worthless, they do nothing; but on a journey they are admirable, full of activity and attention, and they seem never to suffer from fatigue. The nomade life is undoubtedly the one intended by nature for an Irānee.

Soon after leaving Cheshmeh Aalā, we ascended the face of an immense mountain-pass by a zigzag path, up which the Uzbek pony I had procured was carefully led. Even with this precaution the ascent was most unpleasant. Arrived at the top the prospect was worse. We descended through a narrow defile, so steep and rocky that we were forced to walk a great part of the way. The road was diversified by numerous small encampments of Sylsapoor eelyats from Verameen, who had pitched their tents in various nooks of the mountains, close to the stream which wound down the pass. I shall never forget the desolate aspect of one of these encampments. The squalid appearance of the tents, the pale ill-fed children, and the solemn careworn look of the women, were very painful, and fully confirmed what I before said of the misery of many of these eelyats. On halting for the night, we found we were in Mazenderan. It was a delightfully cool spot, surrounded by high mountains, but without a village or inhabitants; situated on a high bank overlooking the river Heraz, which flows past the city of Amol into the Caspian. We enjoyed the cool breezes, and the fresh trout from the river, and pitied our friends in sultry Shemeroon. Next day the road was not quite so precipitous; we

skirted round the mountain of Demawend, and saw the everlasting snow within a few hundred yards of us, while under our feet there was a brilliant carpet of bright blossoms and fragrant herbs. On our right hand was a steep precipice, at the bottom of which rolled the Heraz, and the road was not too difficult to prevent us from appreciating the pleasant embalmed air and wild scene. At length we arrived close to the town of Ask, which seemed to me to be buried in a hole in the mountains, and my heart failed me when I saw the formidable descent we must make before reaching it. The path seemed nearly perpendicular, so I descended from my poor old pony, and walked or rather slid down the whole descent. The Mazenderanees who came out to meet us laughed at my alarm, and said it was an excellent road compared with the mountain paths between Ask and the flat land near Amol. At the entrance of the town we found a large and good house belonging to the chief, Abbas Koolee Khan, Lareejanee, an intimate friend of my husband, prepared for our reception.

Ask is the capital of the mountain-chiefship called Lareejan, and contains about 2500 inhabitants. It is an extraordinary place, situated on the side of a great mountain, and, excepting where the river Heraz has formed an opening, surrounded by other immense mountains, pre-eminent among which was hoary Demawend, whose top, however, we lost sight of, as we were so completely under it.* Unless Meerza Antonio, as Sir Anthony

* Very few Englishmen or other Europeans have had the enterprise to ascend Demawend, whose height is, I believe, 13,000 feet. Mr. Thompson, of Her Majesty's Mission, succeeded in the attempt. He

Shirley was called, was married to a woman of his own country, which could hardly be, seeing Shah Abbas the Great had given him as a wife one of his own relations, I think I must be the first Englishwoman who has been in Mazenderan. I am told that it was in the neighbouring district of Hezār Jereeb, Sir Anthony Shirley laid the first rudiments of a regular force in Persia. The descendants of his corps of Toofengchees, or matchlock-men, maintain a reputation at this day, as being the best in the land.

The district of Lareejan is so completely enclosed by mountains and narrow gorges as to be almost inaccessible to an invader. On this account the chief and his dependents are somewhat unmanageable. At every succession to the throne, or other time of commotion, they generally declare themselves yāghee, or in revolt, and refuse to pay their contributions to the revenue. The other mountain chiefs follow the same course, and our host Abbas Koolee Khan was not the least conspicuous among the mutineers. The British Mission has more than once been of use in bringing these unruly chiefs to a proper sense of obedience.

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set out from Ask with two guides, and spent the first day in reaching a shed half-way up the mountain. The second evening, at sunset, he arrived at the summit, and spent the night in a cavern heated by a warm sulphureous vapour. At Tehran, on clear days, smoke is generally visible issuing from the top. The mountain is evidently a volcano, almost extinct. In the morning, at sunrise, they sallied forth hoping to have a grand panorama of Mazenderan, the Goorgan and Toorkoman coast, Tehran, &c. Nothing was visible but dense clouds. The cold was so intense that they immediately rushed down the mountain at their utmost speed: this was in August. I never could comprehend why they did not return to the cavern and wait a few hours for the clouds to pass away.

The mineral springs were not conveniently situated for an invalid. They lay at the foot of the mountain on which the town is placed, close to the river Herāz. The springs were of two kinds—ferruginous and sulphurcous, separated from each other by the river. The water of the fountain my husband used was tepid, and bubbled out of the earth in an unceasing stream, forming a small tank round the springs in which invalids immersed themselves. To remedy the inconvenience of the absence of a bathing-house, Colonel S—— pitched a tent over one of these basins of water for the performance of his ablutions, which otherwise would have attracted the whole town to witness.

The house we resided in was rather distant from the wells, and we found a ride through the long ill-paved town twice a-day disagreeable. Having seen at the other side of the town near the well, a neat new-looking dwelling, we resolved to take possession of it. The Larecjanees advised us not, saying we should regret the change. This counsel we attributed to mere Persian plotting and intrigue, and in spite of admonition we went. In the night we found ourselves attacked by legions of bugs; for that night, rest was out of the question. Next day we thought we had hit upon an expedient for baffling these our mortal foes, and we pitched a small tent in the open court of the house, and calmly retired to rest. Judge of the horror we felt when, on awaking, we perceived they were in ten times greater numbers than on the night before! The whole nation of the invaders had, as it were, been let loose against us, and we were on the point

of being devoured; the marvel was where they had come from. After a rigid scrutiny we discovered that the ground on which the beds lay was filled with these insects; they must have promised themselves the enjoyment of an abundant carnival. We decamped at daybreak, too happy to regain our old abode. I should exceedingly like to know on what these bloodsuckers subsisted before the night of our arrival, and how they have gained a livelihood since that memorable epoch.

Abbas Koolee Khan, Lareejanee, was absent from Ask during our residence there, but his wife governed in his place. She bore a high reputation as a woman of great respectability and shrewdness, and as a most excellent manager of her husband's property. I had the pleasure of seeing her several times, and was very much amused by the remarks and reflections made by her and two other wives, and the mother, sisters, and various other female relatives of Abbas Koolee Khan. These ladies all seemed to live in Abbas Koolee Khan's house. Their husbands were absent with him, and had appointments in his regiment, which was stationed at Sheeraz. I understand that the ladies of Mazenderan are held in great esteem for their good qualities,—a remark which is said to be applicable to the women of the tribes in general. The principal wife, who managed everything, was very handsome; but I was struck by the beauty of her little daughter, Rookheeya, who was, I think, the most charming child I ever beheld. She looked exactly like a little Jewess. The countenances of the Mazenderanees would indicate a descent from the tribes of Israel, to which I imagine they have no

claim or pretension. The imputation would shock them. Their features are more delicate than those of the other inhabitants of Persia, and bear a strong resemblance to those of the ancient Persians, as they are preserved in the sculptures at Persepolis and Shahpoor.

The Khanum was evidently leading a life of prosperity, yet two subjects gave her grief. She had not seen her husband for three years, and she heard he had in those three years taken two wives, one at Sheeraz and the other, lately, in Tehran. Her meditations were turned upon paying a visit to the Khan, and on ejecting these two rivals. But how was this to be effected, as she could not abandon her government of Lareejan without permission? It was suggested that the Khanum should ask me; that I should apply to my husband to propose to the Khan to invite his wife to pay him a visit at Tehran. I promised to do all I could, and accordingly, on my return to Goolahek, a message was sent to Abbas Koolee Khan, representing the wishes of the Khanum. The reply was favourable; but when the Khanum found she might go if she chose, she changed her mind. She reflected that, though the ejection of a rival was something, yet the loss of the keys of the well-filled store-rooms of Ask and Amol, and the transfer of all the power she now possessed to the hands of another wife, were ideas not to be borne; so she determined to remain where she was.

These hospitable people insisted on making us their guests during our stay, with our large party of servants and horses. It was only a firm resistance, and an intimation that we should be forced to withdraw from Ask,

that enabled us to free them from so costly a display of their friendship. After all, contrary to compact, the Khanum frequently sent presents of sheep, rice, and dressed dinners to the servants. She invited us to breakfast at her house, and, as the entertainment was the only one of the kind I saw in Persia, I may as well give a description of it. We were shown into a large room commanding a fine view of the town and valley. No one was there to receive us, the presence of our Persian servants having excluded the Khanum and her female relations, and my presence having had the same effect on the gentlemen of her family. Two immense wooden trays, each carried by two men, were brought in and deposited on the ground; there seemed to be fifteen or twenty dishes, large and small, on each tray. There were three or four kinds of pillaos of mutton, lamb, and fowl, and several stews and ragouts of most alarming richness of the same viands; salmon, trout, and another fish from the Caspian; omelettes and various other dishes of eggs, several kinds of dressed vegetables, pickles of all kinds in great profusion, and various sherbets of orange, lemon, pomegranate, &c. This was a substantial breakfast for two persons, but I was rather surprised to see two more trays of precisely the same description carried in, and presently, two more still. This continued until there were actually sixteen or twenty trays in the room. The whole floor was covered with them. The Mazenderanees may have good appetites, but it is not easy to guess the meaning of this inordinate hospitality. It was, however, a grateful sight to our servants, for, after we had concluded, all the trays were transferred to them.

Apropos to appetites, I remember hearing that when Persian gentlemen dined at the Mission, after partaking abundantly of a European dinner, with every appearance of relish, on returning to their own houses at midnight they sat down to a formal Persian dinner. It seems that without an ample allowance of pillao they do not feel comfortable, or certain whether they have dined or not.

I was very much amused at seeing two bottles of wine protrude from the pockets of Mahommed Agha, our butler. This breakfast being given at our dinner-hour, he thought it objectionable to deprive us of the usual accompaniment at that meal; but, being ashamed of being detected by the Mazenderanees in the ignoble duty of carrying wine, he had placed the bottles in this unsafe situation. The natives of Mazenderan are strict Mussulmans, and have not yet adopted the wine-drinking habits not uncommon in other parts of Persia. The presence of the Russian squadron near Asterabad is likely to effect a change in this part of their religious observances.

The Khanum told me that Ask was only their yeïlak, or summer residence, and that Amol, near the Caspian, was their kishlak, or winter abode. She said that in October, nearly all the inhabitants of Ask would retire from the mountains until late in the spring of next year. The cold of Ask she declared to be intolerable in winter. This I could well conceive, as the crops were still green. We were obliged in July to wear warm clothes, and used often to warm ourselves by walking up and down in front of the house in the sun.

In spite of the seclusion of her life, the Khanum was a woman of great intelligence and observation. The cares

of administration seemed to have sharpened her understanding, and I am told that Koordish and other eelyat women often display similar intelligence, owing probably to their being treated with more consideration, and allowed to participate more or less in the affairs of the family, and even of the tribe. She was enthusiastic in praise of Mazenderan. According to her it was a degree better than paradise. "Where, in the world," said the Khanum, "is there a place like it,—with the beautiful sea on one side, full of salmon, herrings, and haddocks, besides the shocking porpoises and sturgeon which the Russians eat; and, on the other, these grand mountains to cool us in summer, and warm us in winter with their fine forests? Whatever the earth produces," cried the lady, waxing warmer, "is to be found in Mazenderan; and then the women,—are they not the handsomest in Persia, and the men the bravest in the world? Who ever ventured to attack them in the forest? When did the Russians dare to show themselves in Mazenderan?" I asked the Khanum if the rain, the jungles, and the swamps were to be counted among the excellences of her province, but her enthusiasm placed her far above the reach of any taunt.

She pressed me to pay her a visit at Amol, in the level country, before winter, at which time the city was delightful, according to her account. It is situated in the plain at the foot of the mountains, not far from the sea, and surrounded by beautiful woods and groves of oranges and lemons. In short, she said so much, that if there had been a good road, I should have been tempted to have visited a place so different from Irak; but this is one of the worst points of Persia,—that one is precluded from agree-

able excursions, such as are so pleasant in other countries, by the impracticable roads, hardly safe, even for those accustomed to traverse them, on horseback.

From all I can learn, I am sure this lady's affection for her native province is not misplaced. One of its drawbacks, however, is the vicinity of the Toorkomans, which forces the population of Mazenderan to be constantly on their guard. The peasantry are seldom without arms, even in the cultivation of their fields. The inhabitants of this province are said to make good soldiers in irregular warfare, for which the face of their own country has so well prepared them. Unlike the other parts of Persia, Mazenderan, as well as Geelan, is covered with the densest forests of fine timber intermingled with shrubs and brushwood. All the forest trees of England grow here in the greatest perfection. Along the coast a stripe of land varying from three to twenty miles in breadth, runs the whole length of the two provinces, or rather three, for in Persian geography or statistics, Asterabad is regarded as a separate province, in honour, I suppose, of its having been the original seat of the royal Kajjar tribe, though few of them are now left in that district. This stripe of land is perfectly flat; it is covered with morasses, jungles, and rice plantations, which, added to the almost unceasing rain, make the country nearly impassable, unless by the beaten track, or by the remains of a causeway constructed by Shah Abbas. That monarch delighted to reside in Mazenderan, where he built a sumptuous palace. This level tract is so unhealthy in summer as to cause its inhabitants to abandon it during that season, and to take refuge in the high

mountains which bound this plain along its entire course, and which are accessible only through very difficult passes. That quaint old traveller, Jonas Hanway, says that, excepting old women, mules, and poultry, all other animals pine away with sickness. These mountains (the first range of them we crossed immediately after leaving the Cheshmeh Aalā) separate Tehran from the Caspian. They are known under the name of Elboorz, and can be seen from Shemeroon. They abound in mineral wealth, particularly in coal and iron. Within even thirty miles of Tehran, there are two places where coal can be procured in abundance, at the mere cost of digging and conveying it to the city. In a country destitute of wood like that part of Persia, it might be supposed that so bountiful a supply would have been highly prized; but such is not the case, charcoal and wood are in general use as fuel, and for the favourite koorsee, the former substance is preferable to coal. It is chiefly by the blacksmiths and in the houses of Europeans that coal is used, but this latter circumstance will gradually extend its consumption to the entire population.

From the above remarks it will be seen that Geelan and Mazenderan are sister provinces. In the aspect of the country, the climate, the manners of the people, there is a complete resemblance. The productions, too, are similar, with the exception that in Geelan the culture of silk receives a much greater share of the care and attention of the inhabitants, and large quantities of a fine kind are produced. (H.) The exportation of this article of commerce conduces to the wealth of the province, and thus gives it a vast superiority over Mazenderan, where the

same substance, though of a coarser kind, is manufactured. Sturgeon and salmon are caught in immense quantities on these coasts; the fisheries of the sturgeon are in the hands of Russians, who rent them from the Persian Government. Having no scales, visible at least, this fish is valueless as an article of food to Persians. The best caviare is said to be obtained in the Caspian. The two provinces under a judicious government could be rendered highly valuable. The Russians have more than once attempted to possess themselves of Geelan, and towards the close of the last century, in the reign of Agha Mahommed Khan, the founder of the Kajjars, they made a bold effort to establish themselves in Asterabad. They landed in that country with troops and guns, and commenced building a fort. Agha Mahommed Khan, feeling himself unable to oppose this aggression by force, had recourse to stratagem: he decoyed the Russian commander and his officers to an entertainment, where they were immediately seized, and, under the threat of instant death, forced to surrender their fort, which was razed to the ground.

That excellent Oriental traveller, Mr. James Bayley Fraser, describes with much force the natural power of resistance to foreign invasion possessed by the province of Geelan. The following remarks seem equally applicable to Mazenderan:—"There are few countries more completely protected by nature against external aggression than Geelan, for its coast is lined with a belt of impenetrable forest, which opposes a most disheartening aspect to an invading foe, whose perplexity would be increased by the deep moordābs, or backwaters, and extensive morasses

equally covered with swamps that lie behind this first barrier. At the same time these very obstacles would prove the best advántage to defenders acquainted with their intricacies, and afford them means of securely annoying their enemies. On the south the passes through its mountains are of extreme steepness, difficulty, and length, and could be obstructed or defended with so much ease, that no hostile army, unassisted by treachery, could hope to force them."

Having finished a profitless course of the mineral waters, both in bathing and drinking, we took leave of the kind Larajanees, and set out on our return to the Valley of Demawend. We had no choice but to clamber up by the same steep road that we had slid down four weeks previously. Up-hill the trial to the nerves was not so great. At Cheshmeh Aalā, from whence I received a daily messenger, I found that all had passed prosperously. Every one seemed anxious to make the solitary life of the party we had left there as agreeable as was possible. I begin to think Persians are better people than travellers are willing to allow. English agents are often brought into contact with bad classes, and they hastily assume the whole nation to be equally vicious. In no country could the two servants and young children we left at Cheshmeh Aalā have been treated with more kindness, attention, and respect.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Return to Goolahek — Attempt to murder the Shah — General flight into town — Fate of the conspirators — Strange punishments — Arrival of the Turkish ambassador — Farewell breakfast with the Grand Vezeer's wife.

August, 1852.—GOOLAHEK felt very sultry when we returned to it from our pretty encampment at the "Sublime Well." My husband, however, did not wish to be long absent from the neighbourhood of the Court, so we could not prolong our stay by its cool waters. A few days after our return, when seated in the coolest chamber of a house in the village, the heat having driven us from our tents, Meerza Hoossein Koolee, the first Persian Secretary of the Mission, entered the room ghastly and gasping. "The Shah has been killed!" faltered the Meerza, who used himself frequently to assert that he was the most timid man in Persia. "We shall all be murdered," I immediately exclaimed.

We were quite alone in this moment of deep anxiety, all the members of the Mission having happened to go to town that day, though in a few minutes two or three princes came to our camp, thinking it the safest place in such a crisis. We had, it is true, a guard of Persian soldiers, but on them no dependence could be placed; perhaps they would be the first to plunder us. No time was lost in despatching three messengers: one to the Shah's camp, two miles distant, to learn the state of

affairs; another to Tehran, to purchase ammunition and bring out some fifty carbines and pistols from the Mission stores; and a third was despatched to an Afghan friend, a pensioner of the Indian Government, to send us some of his countrymen to resist the marauders, who would certainly soon make their appearance. In three hours thirty or forty trusty horsemen were in our camp, and we were promised one hundred and fifty before night.

I know not if I ever experienced greater relief than when a note arrived from the Prime Minister, saying that the Shah had been only slightly hurt, and that all was well. His Majesty, just after mounting his horse to proceed on a hunting-excursion, had been attacked in the midst of his guards by four Bābees, who had approached him under the pretence of delivering a petition. The King had been thrown from his horse, and slightly wounded by a pistol-shot, and was on the point of being despatched, when some of his guards, recovering from their stupor, seized the assassins, one only of whom was killed in the scuffle. The two Missions, English and Russian, immediately proceeded to wait on the Shah, to offer their congratulations, which were assuredly most sincere. Notwithstanding his wound, they found his Majesty seated as usual. He was pale, but looked more angry than alarmed. The Shah said that such a thing had never been heard of as the attack he had suffered. In condoling on the event, it was easy, though scarcely appropriate, to allude to Nadir and to the founder of his own dynasty; so his Majesty was reminded that occurrences like this were not uncommon in Petersburg, and that our own gracious Sovereign had not been free from

such attempts. The Shah did not, however, seem to derive any consolation from companionship in his danger.

It appeared that a party of Bābees in town had organised a conspiracy, and had held nightly meetings to mature their schemes. These were simple enough. Their plan was to murder the Shah, sally out, sword in hand, in the midst of the confusion and commotion, seize the government, and then commence the reign of terror and the reign of the saints on earth. Four of the conspirators were chosen to execute the behest of the plotters. What a fearful state of things had we providentially escaped from!

The panic at Shemeroon became general; no one thought himself safe unless within the walls of Tehran. Every bush was a Bābee, or concealed one. Shah, ministers, meerzas, soldiers, priests, merchants, all went pell-mell into Tehran, although a month of the country season still remained. The Russian Mission fled too, so that not a being was left in Shemeroon excepting ourselves, nor a tent excepting those of our camp. Colonel S—— declared he did not think it creditable to take flight, and that he would remain the usual time in his summer-quarters; moreover, if there were any danger, the English Mission would be the last to suffer injury. He was warned by some Persian friends that perhaps the result of this "recklessness" would be like that of a similar resolve, made some years ago, when a violent cholera broke out, and one of the Mission fell a victim to the malady. Still we remained, and no evil followed. Indeed the measures adopted to repress Bābeeism removed all danger for the moment, whatever retaliation the Bābees

may hereafter inflict should their faith ever acquire the ascendancy.

A number of the conspirators had been seized, whose fate it was easy to anticipate. The Prime Minister was reminded that now was the time for a practical display of the advance Persia had made in civilisation, and that on whomsoever death was to be inflicted, it ought to be without the addition of torture. Fear has no mercy. His answer was that this was not a time for trifling; and that the punishment, however severe, of the criminals who sought to spread massacre and spoliation throughout the length and breadth of Persia, was not to be deprecated, or to be included under the designation of torture, which had been defined to be the infliction of pain to extort a confession of guilt.

About thirty persons were put to death, and, as is customary in that sect, or, perhaps, in all new sects, they met their doom without shrinking. Suleiman Khan, the chief of the conspirators, and two others suffered torture previously to execution. The two last were either cut to pieces, or shot or blown from mortars. Holes were pierced in various parts of Suleiman Khan's body, into which lighted candles were placed, and allowed to burn down to the flesh, and, while still alive, he was divided into two parts with a hatchet. During these horrible tortures he is said to have preserved his fortitude to the last, and to have danced to the place of execution in defiance of his tormentors, and of the agony caused by the burning candles. Among the conspirators was a moolla of some reputation. After the attack on the Shah had failed, he had persisted in urging on the accom-

plishment of the plot. He told the disciples that the work must not be left incomplete, and that he was resolved to bare his arm, and, sword in hand, to attack the Shah on his entrance into Tehran; that if they saw him lying as if dead, they were not to believe it; they were to fight, and he would rise and be among them.

Strange was the device adopted by the Prime Minister to elude the danger personal to himself of slaying so many fanatical Bābees. Their vengeance was to be apprehended, as about this time many persons were unaccountably murdered in Tehran, who, it was supposed, had been too explicit in the expression of their feelings against Bābeeism. His Excellency resolved to divide the execution of the victims among the different departments of the state; the only person he exempted was himself. First came the Shah, who was entitled to khissās, or legal retaliation, for his wound. To save the dignity of the crown, the steward of the household, as the Shah's representative, fired the first shot at the conspirator selected as his victim, and his deputies, the ferashes, completed the work. The Prime Minister's son headed the Home Office, and slew another Bābee. Then came the Foreign Office. The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, a pious, silly man, who spent his time in conning over the traditions of Mahommed, with averted face made the first sword-cut, and then the Under-Secretary of State and clerks of the Foreign-Office hewed their victim into pieces. The priesthood, the merchants, the artillery, the infantry, had each their allotted Bābee. Even the Shah's admirable French physician, the late lamented Dr. Cloquet, was invited to show his loyalty by following the

example of the rest of the Court. He excused himself, and pleasantly said he killed too many men professionally to permit him to increase their number by any voluntary homiçide on his part.* The Sedr was reminded that these barbarous and unheard-of proceedings were not only revolting in themselves, but would produce the utmost horror and disgust in Europe. Upon this he became very much excited, and asked angrily, "Do you wish the vengeance of all the Bābees to be concentrated upon me alone?"

The following is an extract from the 'Tehran Gazette' of that day, and will serve as a specimen of a Persian "leader:"—

"Some profligate, unprincipled individuals, destitute of religion, became disciples of the accursed Seyed Alī Mahommed Bāb, who some years ago invented a new religion, and who afterwards met his doom. They were unable to prove the truth of their faith, the falsehood of which was visible. For instance, many of their books having fallen into our hands, they are found to contain nothing but pure infidelity. In worldly argument, too, they never were able to support their religion, which seemed fit only for entering into a contest with the Almighty. They then began to think of aspiring to sove-

* The fate of this gentleman was most melancholy. Returning one evening from attending on the Shah, he called for a glass of wine. His servant, an Armenian, brought him a bottle of liquor, of which he drank a glass, and only then discovered that it was a deadly poison. He died in great agony ten days afterwards. He was highly valued among all classes.

reignty, and to endeavour to raise insurrections, hoping to profit by the confusion, and to pillage the property of their neighbours.

"A wretched miserable gang, whose chief, Moolla Sheikh Ali of Toorsheez, styled himself the deputy of the former Bāb, and who gave himself the title of High Majesty, collected round themselves some of the former companions of Bāb. They seduced to their principles some dissolute debauchees, one of whom was Hajee Suleiman Khan, son of the late Yaheya Khan of Tabreez. In the house of this Hajee it was their practice to assemble for consultation, and to plan an attempt on the auspicious life of his Majesty. Twelve of their number, who were volunteers for the deed, were selected to execute their purpose, and to each of them were given pistols, daggers, &c. It was resolved that the above number should proceed to the Shah's residence at Neeaveran, and await their opportunity."

Then follows an account of the attack, which I have already given in sufficient detail.

"Six persons, whose crimes were not so clearly proved, were condemned to perpetual imprisonment; the remainder were divided among the priesthood, the doctors of the law, the chief servants of the court, the people of the town, merchants, tradesmen, artizans, who bestowed on them their deserts in the following manner:—

"The moollas, priests, and learned body slew Moolla Sheikh Ali, the deputy of Bāb, who gave himself the title of Imperial Majesty, and who was the author of this atrocity.

"The princes slew Seyed Hassan, of Khorassan, a man

of noted profligacy, with pistol-shots, swords, and daggers.

"The Minister of Foreign Affairs, full of religious and moral zeal, took the first shot at Moolla Zeyn-ul-âbedeen of Yezd, and the secretaries of his department finished him and cut him in pieces.

"The Nizam ool Mulk (son of the Prime Minister) slew Moolla Hoossein.

"Meerza Abdul Wahab, of Sheeraz, who was one of the twelve assassins, was slain by the brother and sons of the Prime Minister; his other relations cut him in pieces.

"Moolla Fetoollah, of Koom, who fired the shot which wounded the royal person, was killed thus. In the midst of the royal camp candles were placed in his body (by making incisions) and lighted. The steward of the household wounded him in the very place that he had injured the Shah, and then the attendants stoned him.

"The nobles of the court sent Sheikh Abbas of Tehran to hell.

"The Shah's personal attendants put to death Mahommed Baukir, one of the twelve.

"The Shah's master of the horse and the servants of the stable horse-shod Mahommed Tekkee of Sheeraz, and then sent him to join his companions.

"The masters of the ceremonies and other nobles, with their deputies, slew Mahommed of Nejjeffabad with hatchets and maces, and sent him to the depths of hell.

"The artillerymen first dug out the eye of Mahommed Ali of Nejjeffabad, and then blew him away from a mortar.

"The soldiers bayoneted Syed Hoossein, of Meelan, and sent him to hell.

"The cavalry slew Meerza Reffee.

"The adjutant-general, generals, and colonels slew Syed Hoossein."

No people love jesting and bantering more than the Persians. In Tehran, when any one is installed in office, it is usual for his friends and those under his authority to send him sheereenee, sweetmeats, as a token of congratulation. When these executions were over, it was said that the Shah's meerghazabs had presented sheereenee to all the ministers of state, as a mark of their admission into the brotherhood. The chief executioner at the Shah's court is a very important personage. Hateful as he is to every one, it is curious, I hear, to observe the deference with which he is treated. As the highest of the courtiers may one day fall into his fangs, and his eyes or feet be in jeopardy, they do the utmost to propitiate him beforehand by flattering civilities, something on the principle of the Indians' worship of his infernal majesty.

There was still another victim. This was a young woman, the daughter of a moolla in Mazenderan, who, as well as her father, had adopted the tenets of Bāb. The Bābees venerated her as a prophetess; and she was styled the Khooret-ool-eyn, which Arabic words are said to mean, Pupil of the eye. After the Bābee insurtection had been subdued in the above province, she was brought to Tehran and imprisoned, but was well treated. When these executions took place she was strangled. This was a cruel and useless deed.

It was said that the general impression produced on

the people by all this bloodshed was not favourable. Indignation at the attempt on the Shah's life was lost in sympathy for the fate of so many sufferers. The common opinion was, that the poor misguided conspirators of mean condition, whose poverty more than any sentiment of disloyalty or irreligion had enrolled them in the ranks of Bābeeism, might have been spared. It thus appears that, even in Persia, a vague undefined feeling of liberality in religion is taking root.

November 2nd.—Tehran was enlivened this month by the arrival of an Ottoman Embassy, at the head of which was a very distinguished person, Ahmed Vefeek Effendi. This gentleman was a most agreeable addition to our small society. His conversation, manners, and perfect knowledge of French would enable him to pass for a high-bred Frenchman; and I was informed that his talents were on an equality with his accomplishments. It was a constant theme of surprise to us all, how a person of his capacity could be condemned to the obscurity of so remote a country as Persia; and the only solution to the enigma was found in the well-known intrigues of Constantinople.

I am informed that there is a great contrast between the manners of an Ottoman and a Persian of the higher classes. Both are perfectly like gentlemen, but in a different way. The Osmanli is calm, sedate, polished, perhaps a little effeminate; the Persian is lively, cordial, witty, and amiable; perhaps a little boisterous, for he is still an eelyat. The Turkish courtier spends his time in roaming up and down the Bosphorus, leading a life of luxury and ease, never quitting the capital. The Persian

courtier is constantly on horseback, hunting with his sovereign, in weather of all kinds, or accompanying him in journeys from one end of Persia to the other. The Osmanli may be more refined; the Iranee is more original.

One can hardly imagine a grave Osmanli seated at the piano playing European and Turkish airs; yet one of the gentlemen of the Turkish Embassy sometimes did us this favour, and showed considerable power on the instrument. What would his grandsire say, I sometimes thought, if he could see him? The next step will be emancipation of the women from seclusion, and from the present pretence of a veil.

In Persia, for want of more important subjects of contention, trifles assume a magnitude unintelligible in Europe. Samee Effendi, the predecessor of the present ambassador, fought (on paper) two arduous battles, one about a pair of shoes, the other concerning a chair. Ahmed Vefeek Effendi is obliged to expend his diplomatic powers in a struggle to display an Ottoman flag over his door, like his colleagues. Great pugnacity and dexterity were arrayed on both sides; and I believe the contest had not ceased up to the moment we left Persia. Diplomatic life in that country seems made up of things like these.

February, 1853.—My husband finding it useless to struggle against bad health, we resolved to quit Persia at once, and so avoid the enervating effects of another summer. We had a great deal to arrange before our departure, and Colonel S—— had numerous visits to pay. As for me, I had only three or four. The Sedr Azim or

Grand Vezeer's wife, when she heard I was going away, wrote to ask me to breakfast with her on an appointed day. I of course accepted the invitation, and spent a pleasant morning in her society. She is such a good woman, besides being a remarkably clever and intelligent one, that she is highly esteemed and respected. The Sedr Azim treats her as a European husband treats his wife; and she has no rivals in her anderoon. The *déjeûner* was spread on a table, and served on handsome porcelain, with knives and forks for all the party. I observed she and a friend of hers who sat beside me were very much embarrassed by these gastronomic implements, so I begged they would put them aside. They instantly adopted my suggestion, and tore off great pieces of a savoury stewed lamb, and swallowed handfuls of rice which had been cooked in fat. They took the precaution of squeezing a portion of the fat out of it with their fingers, before eating it. Wishing to show me particular attention, the Khanum tore off a delicate morsel, and with her own hands put it into my mouth. There were six or seven of her children seated round the table, fine healthy boys and girls, who ate like Europeans without any difficulty, and two of the boys spoke French. When the ladies had washed their hands and smoked their kalleoons, we went to look at the house and garden. It was a fine mansion, built in the usual fashion of the country, of courts leading into other courts. All the rooms were on the ground-floor; but underneath there were immense apartments, nearly dark, where the family lived in warm weather. All the good Tehran houses have these zeerzemeens, as they are called. The floor of the room

where she received me was covered with fine Cashmeer shawls; and there were cushions embroidered with gold, and others covered with gold brocade, placed against the wall all around the room. The children ran about laughing and playing, just like English young folks. They all seemed very happy and gay, more so than any family I had seen in Tehran. The Sedr Azim's wife is a Mazenderanee, of the tribe of Nooree, and a first cousin of her husband, who, as I said before, always calls her "my uncle's daughter."

CHAPTER XIX.

Quit Tehran — Journey to Tabreez — Lake of Ooroomeya — Farewell to Persia — Oppression of the Armenians by the Koords — Our lodgings in Turkish Armenia — Erzeroom — Road and journey from Erzeroom to Trebizond — Pass of Kara Kappan — Jevezlik — Trebizond — Quarantine — Lazes — Constantinople.

Tabreez, March 21st, 1853.—ON the 1st of this month we left Tehran, my mind full of anxiety and care. It was an arduous undertaking, with an invalid and with three young children, to commence a journey of 1000 miles to Trebizond. But there was no resource; and there is always consolation in remembering "la journée sera dure, mais elle se passera." To have gone by Bagdad would have brought us into the heats of India. The Caucasus was still covered with snow; and to an invalid the fatigue and privation of Russian travelling are excessive. There was consequently no choice. This is one of the most disagreeable circumstances incidental to a residence in Persia. Once established in that country, it is nearly impossible to get out of it. The distance is so great, and the mode of travelling necessarily so slow, one must be content to undergo either the heat of the torrid zone or the cold of Siberia, unless by leaving Tehran in spring, and choosing the road by Erzeroom, or in autumn, and then adopting the circuitous route of Bagdad and India.

Three takhterewans contained our party, in which we slowly wended our way to Tabreez, sometimes on horse-

back for an hour or two, to enjoy the fresh air, which in a takht one does not get much of. A minister leaving his post is a different person from one proceeding to the place of his diplomatic functions; yet we found no change in politeness, cordiality, and attention. The tea and sugar, it is true, no longer appeared at each station; but such things are mere matters of form.

We reached Tabreez yesterday after a more agreeable journey than was to be anticipated. The weather was delightful, though cold, as we ascended to Azerbijan. After a few days' rest we intend to continue our journey to Erzeroom, where we shall again take some repose.

Erzeroom, April 20th.—We are to-morrow to resume our journey to Trebizond; that much wished-for port, where we shall have done with this protracted and really toilsome journey. This rest was much required by all our party; and we enjoyed the clean boarded floors and white-washed walls of the small house in which we lodge, and which seems a palace after the shelters where we have passed our nights during the preceding week. I must take up my journey, however, from our last halting-place, Tabreez, which we left on the 30th of March.

Khoee was the first town of importance after Tabreez. On our way to it we passed close to the Lake of Ooroomeya, otherwise called Shahee. On ascending the high pass leading to Khoee the lake lay at our feet. We had a fine view over the expanse of that silent water, the Dead Sea of Persia, which contains no living thing. The islands of the lake, the mountains of Maragha, those of the Mikree Koords at the south of the lake near the Jaghataï, part of the district of Ooroomeya with the Koordistan mountains

behind it, revealed themselves with the rising sun. It was a fine panorama. We only stayed to rest and breakfast at Khoee, that important and defenceless city, open and ready to be seized upon by any invader; but pressed on to the next stage. Three days more brought us to the famous plains of Chalderān, the scene of a great battle between Shah Ismaël Seffi and Sultan Selim, in which the former, after the display of extraordinary prowess, was defeated. It was here the Shah cut with his sword the chain with which the Turkish guns were linked. The succeeding day brought us to Awajik, the frontier village of Persia. The next day we crossed the celebrated pass of Kazlee Gool, which, however, after what I had beheld in Mazenderan, was nothing. Here is the boundary between Persia and Turkey; and as guns cross the pass constantly, the road ranks among the tolerably good. Bayazeed lay two hours to the right, perched among crags, which we were neither in the mood nor in the plight to explore.

Here, then, we bade farewell, a long farewell—that word of gloom—to Iran. The retrospect of my sojourn in that land is mingled with various feelings. It is agreeable now to look back, to have made the journey, and to have resided in a world so different from our own; and, notwithstanding my pleasure at the thought of once more ruturning to Europe, yet I felt a kind of pang as I returned the salutes of the Mehmendar and his suite, and a sense of loneliness as we pursued our bleak track through Turkish Armenia, a detestable land, made so by misrule. Mr. Morier, in quitting Persia, says that his sensations were exactly those expressed by Tournefort

when he determined to return to France; and I have only to add, that, notwithstanding the momentary feeling of uneasiness, my sensations were exactly those of Mr. Morier. He goes on to say that the people are false, the soil is dreary, and disease is in the climate.

Both sides of the frontier present a direful aspect of desolation. The country is filled with various tribes of nomadic Koords, Hyderanlee, Zeelān, Meelān, Jellālee, and others, who plunder caravans and travellers whenever there is impunity, and oppress the villagers, chiefly Armenian, at all times. One day they declare themselves the subjects of Turkey, and the next of Persia, to screen themselves from the punishment their crimes deserve. The face of the country shows the insecurity caused by their presence. The villages are few, and in a state of miserable poverty, notwithstanding the rich well-watered plains in which they are situated. The cold is so intense in this part of Turkey and Persia as to prevent the Koords from passing the winter in their tents. Those who cannot migrate disperse in small parties in the Armenian villages, which they not only insist on sharing with the inhabitants, but force these poverty-stricken Armenians to supply them with forage for the sustenance of their numerous flocks and herds.

Let the reformers of Turkey ponder on this crying evil, and save the poor Armenians from the oppressions of the wicked Koords. The other grievance already mentioned, of Mussulman travellers making Armenian villages the special places of rest, for the purpose of indulging more freely in oppression and caprice, has already been mentioned. We ourselves had practical experience of this

propensity. Our Turkish mehmander invariably endeavoured. until resisted, to select an Armenian village for our nightly halt; and when resting in a Mussulman village, he was equally solicitous to expel Armenians from their houses for our accommodation. This question was a subject of almost daily remonstrance and reproof; but habit had made the mehmander inveterate in this matter. He promised often and performed seldom, as happens among the Osmanlis. A Georgian proverb says, "He who trusts to a Turk, leans on a wave."

Aghree Dagh, or Ararat—our old acquaintance in Russian Armenia—was once more our great landmark. It lay on our right hand, and seemed quite close. I think, however, it did not look so grand as on the Russian side; owing perhaps to the greater height of the ground from which we were gazing at it.

We plodded our weary way through Turkish Armenia. This was the most disagreeable part of my Eastern experience. The annoyance arose from the dreadful accommodation at night, which no words, at least none that I can command, could describe. The villages in Armenia are scarcely visible at a short distance, the roofs of the houses being hardly raised above the adjacent ground; so that sometimes one walks over a house, and is in danger of sinking through the roof before becoming aware that it is a human habitation. In that romantic history, the retreat of the Ten Thousand Greeks, this peculiarity is alluded to. The cause must be the intense severity of the climate. The interior of these houses is completely destitute of even an approach to comfort; though they certainly fulfil the object sought, that of obtaining warmth. They consist of

stables of vast extent, sunk under ground, and filled with buffaloes, cows, sheep, horses, poultry; here the family live, and here too we lived. There were no windows; and the only outlets from these houses are the door and a hole in the roof. The atmosphere in the interior may be conceived, and so too may the misery of the nights passed in these abodes. We were provided with tents; but the cold was far too great to admit of our using them. These stables generally contained a sakkoo, on which the family resided. This is the platform I have already alluded to, raised two or three feet above the ground. Sometimes the villages were so small and so poor as not to possess even one of these spacious stables; on which occasions, leaving the single room to our children, we used to satisfy ourselves with the accommodation of the doorway. Altogether it was a time of hardship and trial; for sickness was augmented, and comforts had decreased. With the exception of the Pass of Dehar, the road was fortunately level and good. No incidents marked the journey; the inhabitants of the villages were civil and obliging, and the Koords had not approached these high grounds, where no pasture was yet to be found for their flocks and herds. We consequently were free from alarm on their account. A few years ago whole caravans used to be swept away by these banditti; but of late the improved relations between Persia and Turkey have rendered travelling by this road an undertaking of less risk than formerly. Nevertheless, the danger, great as it sometimes was, from Koords, snow, and cold, could not induce merchants or muleteers to abandon this road

and adopt the safer and more commodious route through Georgia and Russian Armenia.

I had become so accustomed to fine mountain scenery as to be comparatively indifferent to it; and I had learned to be far more anxious about good roads than good views. Still it was impossible not to be impressed by the wild grandeur of the scenes around us. Ararat long remained in sight, and was succeeded by the steep and dark range separating us from Kars; then came the remarkable peak of Koosehdagh. At Hassan Kalla, one stage from Erzeroom, we had a respite from subterraneous, pestiferous stables. This is a picturesque town, with a castle perched on a high steep rock overhanging it. It is said that this town, or Erzeroom, was the boundary of the Roman Empire. From Berwick to Hassan Kalla—a goodly kingdom! My husband found here in the governor an old friend, who insisted on vacating his house for us.

Here, in Erzeroom, we feel ourselves to be approaching Europe; a large European society, as it seemed to us, being established in that town. There are consuls from France, England, and Russia, with their families, missionaries from America, besides numerous Europeans in the service of the Porte. The American missionaries, at the head of whom was the Rev. Mr. Peabody, have been most kind in lending us this comfortable house during our stay in this city.

Erzeroom is a large town, dirtier and more disagreeable, I think, than even a Persian city; though it has the advantage of not being built of sun-dried brown bricks, and of the houses having windows to the street. Being

situated at the extremity of an immense plain, on a hill at the foot of a range of mountains, it makes a striking appearance from a distance, with its castle and numerous minarets and mosques. 'It winter it must be one of the bleakest and most desolate places in Asia. 'My husband passed nearly two years here, and has seen a heavy snow-shower in July. Snow falls in November, and does not disappear from the plains until the middle of April. The climate is so desperate that the inhabitants are reduced to designate a cabbage-field as "the garden;" there being no other known throughout the land. Add to this six melancholy poplars, and behold the extent of the sylvan and horticultural productions of Erzeroom. The thermometer falls to 27° below zero, Fahrenheit; and nevertheless wheat and barley are produced in abundance in the ample plain or valley below. The inhabitants are notorious for their ignorance and fanaticism. A few years ago a tumult was excited by some disagreement between a party of Persians and Turks. The mob rose in wrath, and resolved to exterminate the whole of the Persian population. They marched to the house of the Persian commissioner, the colleague of Sir W. Williams, and prepared to assault it. Had they succeeded in gaining an entrance, no doubt all the inmates would have been massacred. Sad to say, to appease the craving fury of the vile multitude, the commissioner thrust forth one of his followers—a hapless traveller, I believe. In a moment he was hacked to pieces. In the mean while the Turkish authorities and troops, with Sir W. Williams and General Tchernitchoff, the Russian commissioner, appeared in time to save the remainder.

Trebizond, May 7th.—When we left Erzeroom, on the

21st of April, we felt sure that seven marches, as they are called, would have brought us to this place. Sudden and serious illness interfered, and we only reached Trebizond on the 4th of this month.

We were glad to quit dreary Erzeroom, and for the first two days got on very well; the road was good, and we had "superior" stables to sleep in. A few miles from the town we crossed the Euphrates, as the Kara Soo is honoured by being designated; though the other and more important branch, under the name of Morad, rises within some miles of Bayazeed. It was curious to look at this rivulet, and then think of the mighty Shattool Arab at Bussora. At twenty miles from Erzeroom we entered the mountains by the pass of Khoosha Poongar. I may say that from hence to Trebizond, a distance of about 150 miles, it was nothing but a succession of mountain upon mountain, increasing daily in size and ruggedness, excepting in the vicinity of Baiboort, on the Choorook Soo river, where there was a short respite. Surveyed from the top of one mountain, the whole country looked like a gigantic rough sea, the mountain peaks seeming to be monstrous waves. The toil of travelling in takhterewans in these elevated regions may be conceived, as well as the uncomfortable sensations of passing in that vehicle through precipitous paths over-hanging yawning gulfs. I could sometimes see, on such occasions, the precipice beneath, and would have wished to quit the takht, but it was too late, as to stop would only increase the danger. The accommodations became worse and worse, and we began to regret the stables of the lower tracts, which at least were dry. Here the houses were built of mud and loose stones, admitting such damp as

produced most acute illness, of which the issue was doubtful, and which obliged us to stop in a lonely village for four days. Misled by the muleteers, who thought only of the shortest road to their destination, we endeavoured, though now only early spring, to reach Trebizond by the summer road. This led us over the toilsome but magnificent pass of Kara Kapan. There was no danger, but the fatigue was excessive. Contrary to our expectations, the path was covered with deep snow, which forced us to quit the takhts, and wade more than ankle-deep through it for long distances. In our circumstances this necessity was a sore trial. But I learned on this journey that neither children nor invalids know how much fatigue and privation they can endure until they are under compulsion. We were fourteen hours on the road that day; and as we had expected to arrive at the summit at about three o'clock, we had not brought any provisions with us. The children became very hungry, and eagerly grasped at some stale bread one of the servants had in his pocket. At length we reached the top, and found there four or five little huts which had not been occupied since the preceding autumn, and were still damp with the winter's snow. Glad we were, nevertheless, to enter them, and warm ourselves at the blazing pine-wood the servants had collected.

Next morning early we prepared to descend from bleak winter's snow into sunny, smiling spring. Only one more stage remained to Trebizond, and we were able to appreciate the glorious prospect before us fully. The road was broad and safe; it wound through a thick wood of fine trees, intermingled, as we descended, with shrubs, evergreens, and creeping plants. The rhododendron and myrtle

were in full blow, and the number of wild flowers was surprising. A residence of some years in barren Persia contributes in no small degree to the enjoyment of a scene like this. At the bottom of the pass we reached our station, Jevizlik, than which a more lovely spot cannot be conceived. Two streams rush through the valley, and, uniting close to Jevizlik, fall into the sea near Trebizond. A most romantic-looking castle, perched on a steep rock, overlooks the stream, and guards the pass. Woods and verdure clothe the hills and mountains to the top, intermingled with cultivated lands, villages, and detached farm-houses. If the sea were visible, I question if the road from Leghorn to Genoa would afford a finer sight. The next day we reached Trebizond. This city was not visible until we were within two or three miles of it. Suddenly, on getting round a mountain which had intercepted the view, it lay below at our feet like a beautiful panorama. The sea looked like an old friend, and was dotted with ships and steamboats. I felt that our toils were over, and as if we were already in Europe. This thriving town rises from the sea up the face of the hill, not unlike Genoa. Compared with the Persian cities and the Turkish towns I had seen, it was neatness itself. On the east of the town are the craggy rocks of Boz Teppeh; on the west is the ancient castle; and to the south are ranges of wooded hills, rising in height as they successively recede. English commerce and steam have raised Trebizond to its present flourishing state, by the vast quantities of English manufactures which from hence are conveyed to Persia, for which Bushir and Bagdad had been the previous routes. It is strange that a Persian Armenian should

have been the first to discover the convenience of this road. But Armenians have a genius for commerce, though seldom of an enterprising kind. This gentleman, whose name was Sittik Khan, conveyed, twenty-four years ago, a cargo of merchandise belonging to himself, or to his friends in England, through all the perils, at that time very serious, from the Koordish marauders; and each succeeding year has augmented the number and the value of the caravans.

We are undergoing here the ordeal of a ten days' quarantine, to remind us, I suppose, that we are on the threshold of Europe. If we were more comfortably lodged, the repose after our harassing journey would be rather a luxury than otherwise.

I hear the Turk of Trebizond is a very different person from the genuine Osmanli. The distinction is so visible and so great, as to create a strong belief of his being a Greek in disguise—the descendant, in short, of the old Greek population. Though affecting to be real Osmanlis, that is, the offspring of the Turkish invaders, collected together by the house of Osman, they are by the latter called Lāz, that being the name of the population between Trebizond, Batoon, and Gooriel. I am informed that the Lāz are probably allied in race with the Mingrelians and Imeretians, to whom they are said to bear a resemblance in dialect. Among the real Turks their reputation is low, to be called a Lāz being held as a term of reproach equivalent to an imputation of a want of faith, honour, or religion. A Lāz, as a Turkish proverb says, will at any time "kill a man for an onion."

There cannot be a greater contrast than that between the

"Trebizanli" Lāz, or Greek, and the lazy fanatic Turk of Erzeroom, laden with conceit and ignorance. The native of Trebizond is said to be full of activity and energy; he is cheerful and lively; unlike everything Turkish, he puts his gun on his shoulder and trudges over the mountains in quest of game. Still more curious and un-Turkish, you meet him on Friday with a party of his comrades, sauntering amid the beautiful environs of his native city, accompanied by a fiddler and singer, with whom he does not disdain to join in chorus. It is suspected that on these occasions the merrymakers are supported by something which gives inspiration to the fiddle and song.

Constantinople, June 2nd.—In due time, or rather after due time, we reached Istambol. There are two companies of steamboats between Trebizond and Constantinople, Austrian and English, and considerable rivalry exists between them. At one time they took deck passengers for nothing, and, they say, treated them to a dish of pillao besides; but I cannot vouch for the truth of the latter part of the story. Our large party was a prize, and by some Levantine cleverness we were booked in a crazy English boat. The deck was so entirely covered with deck passengers, that for five days we could never leave the close cabin. I do not know what would have become of us if there had been a storm, for the paddles hardly moved. To this day I cannot think of it without a feeling of resentment towards all concerned in putting us on board. We were met in the harbour of Constantinople by Lieutenant Glascott, of the Royal Navy, attached to the Perso-Turkish Frontier Commission, who kindly brought to meet

us two nice caiques, and had carriages ready for us on the shore to take us to the hotel.

Whoever has seen Constantinople will pardon the cupidity of the Emperor Nicholas. It is created for universal empire, and one does not wonder the Romans transferred their capital to this magnificent site. A traveller from Persia sees Constantinople under a different aspect from one coming from the West. To me everything was *couleur de rose*, and Pera had all the effect of a European town. The shop-windows—the hairdressers—the ladies in their wonderfully small French bonnets and with their faces uncovered—the Osmanli women, too, with their gauze veils and frightful costume, the former covering without concealing the lips—the strange-looking cabs in the streets—all was new and delightful to me.

We brought with us to Constantinople, all the way from Tehran, two Persian men-servants and a Persian nurse. One of the former was engaged to be married to the nurse, who was a widow, on their return to Tehran. Next door to the hotel where we resided lived a family of Perotes, among whom were several young ladies remarkably well looking. They spent several hours daily in walking up and down before their door, without bonnets or shawls, gaily attired in nicely fitting dresses. They completely absorbed and bewildered our two Persians, who devoted the day to gazing on these houris, and in lamenting they could not take wives like these back to Persia. The nurse was forgotten, and she became excessively angry, abused her betrothed, and said she could never bestow another thought on such a fool as he proved himself to be.

We had the ill luck to find the principal hotel completely full, so that we were obliged to content ourselves with one not of equal excellence. We were, I doubt not, troublesome guests, and an invalid cuisine requires care. I am sure we should have fared very badly had it not been for the kindness of Her Majesty's Ambassador. I shall always preserve a grateful recollection of Lord Stratford's many kindnesses during a month's residence at Constantinople.

One of the most remarkable sights in the streets of Constantinople is the appearance of the Sisters of Charity. It is strange to see in the midst of the Turkish town their well-known dress, recalling to mind the streets of Paris. Not only do they pass through the crowd unmolested in the performance of their duties, but are even treated with consideration and respect. Two large establishments of these nuns have been formed in Galata and Pera. With the exception of one or two Irishwomen, these nuns are all natives of France. I paid a visit to one of the former, who showed me over the fine hospital, where sick strangers are admitted without regard to creed or country.

Here I shall conclude. The journey home, by Malta and Marseilles, is an everyday occurrence, and my joy at returning would have been complete but for the death of our faithful terrier, Crab. I shall not attempt to say how this event embittered everything, for it is uninteresting to all, and by some would not be understood.

ADDITIONAL NOTES.

Note (A.). Page 39.

Russian Military Influence in the East.

General Macintosh's plan for conducting the siege of Sebastopol — Our share in its fall — Suggestion for making military service compulsory — Our next battle-field against Russia: prospects if in Georgia — Inactivity of Schamil and the mountain tribes during the late war — The Russian army in Georgia, its pay and mortality — Caucasian tribes — Power of Russia south of the Caucasus.

Eupatoria, Sebastopol, Kaffa, Kertch! These memorable names excite recollections too vivid to leave them without devoting a few reflections to the theatre of so many momentous deeds. True, though trite, it is easy to be wise after the event; yet who can help regretting that a different plan was not followed in the subjugation of Sebastopol?

There was, however, one man who was wise before the event. Major-General Macintosh, who now commands the forces in the Ionian Islands, clearly laid down the principle at the commencement of the siege, if not before it, that the mode of conducting an attack against Sebastopol was by landing an army at Kertch, and, after beating the enemy in the open field, to cut off the communication with Perekop, and then commence the siege at full leisure, with all the appliances of war. General Macintosh's book is not before me, but this is the substance of his plan, which he develops in considerable detail, and with the intelligence of a man who knows his profession, and has been on the ground.

Sebastopol has, however, fallen, and the English army has earned a share, small or great, of the reputation of that feat. We cannot disguise from ourselves that we

were eclipsed by the overwhelming numerical superiority of the French. Some among us find consolation by deluding themselves with the assurance that we are not a military nation, and should not pretend to vie with a people essentially martial, like our Gallic neighbours. Most bitter consolation! With a European population, the colonies being included, little inferior to that of France, we are driven to the resource of hiring mercenaries from every land, heedless of the fate of those nations who have sought to defend their soil or their interests by the arms of foreign levies.

When wealth and luxury have taken such root, that an army can no longer be obtained by voluntary recruitment adequate to maintain the honour and the interests of an empire, or secure respect from friend and foe, its dignity and safety combine in urging the community to a sacrifice; the state of war should be the signal for making every man throughout the land fit for military service available wherever necessary.

In these days, when the voice of the people is so potent, we may feel assured that no war can be undertaken from mere wantonness, or unless the interests of the nation absolutely require it.

When war is unavoidable, there seems no good reason why the person as well as the purse should not be made available for the general welfare. A law of this kind, passed with the consent of the nation—the Crown, the aristocracy, and the people—is no greater infringement on the liberty of the subject in the one case than in the other.

The economy to the State would be great. The man whose lot it was to take his place in the ranks of the army for a limited space would not require to be bribed by high bounties, or high pay, or pampered with high feeding; an assurance would thus be given for the maintenance of a large force during war.

The "Peace party" ought to hail a measure of this kind, for no stronger guarantee could be given for peace. Such a law, added to the wealth of England, would render her

invincible if attacked, and make other nations slow to provoke her enmity.

But the day for this act of legislation has not yet come. Still, who can tell how soon it may force itself on the consideration of the nation with an irresistible pressure?

Peace has, however, been proclaimed—a peace which Russia has been in such haste to conclude that suspicion is aroused whether she intends it to be permanent. Will the next battle-field be the Crimea, or Bessarabia, or Georgia?

It is hazardous to offer a prediction of the result of warlike operations in a remote country, where chance, an unskilful commander, the interception of a convoy, may defeat the most adroit combinations. Yet, should the Georgian provinces be the scene of our next campaign against Russia, there appears a fair chance of success for our arms. It would scarcely seem a sound calculation to reckon on efficient aid from the Christian population of those provinces; they appear, compared with other Asiatic states, to be fairly governed, or at all events with an absence of violence and oppression. They partake, without molestation, of the material enjoyments of life; unlike their co-religionists in Persia, if not in Turkey, their property is safe from sequestration; and they are from time to time admitted to high military employment. Bagration, of the days of 1812, was a Georgian; and Bebutoff, the governor of Tiflis, is an Armenian. The want of that liberty of speech so cherished by Asiatics, and the more than occasional corruption of Russian authorities, are their chief grievances. An inroad of Turks, therefore, backed though it may be by the name and reputation of England and France, will have little allurement for people in their condition, who, from similarity of religion, hardly feel their conquerors to be foreigners. But it is in all likelihood otherwise as to the Mussulman population of the Transcaucasian districts. They can scarcely yet have forgotten the real independence of their government when nominally subject to Persia and Turkey. They have not amalgamated with the Russians. Though Sheahs, and therefore not friendly to the followers of Omar, it seems tolerably certain that the prospect of independence and of

casting off the Christian yoke would make them smother sectarian rivalry, and, remembering only their common Mahommedanism, they would welcome the Ottoman flag, particularly in conjunction with the forces of France and England.

It is impossible to avoid being struck with the little that has been done, during the war just terminated, by Shamil, the Lezghees, the Circassians, and other mountain tribes, in molesting the Russians in the Caucasus, and, above all, in harassing, if not interrupting, their communications through its defiles. After the feats we have formerly read of the destruction of various Russian corps, general after general driven back with slaughter, to any one who has beheld the formidable defile of Dariel, a bold stroke against the Russians, conducted by a master head and hand like Shamil's, would seem no impossibility. Want of unity of purpose, the interests of to-day overruling those of to-morrow, or levity and corruption, are the best explanation of great hopes being disappointed, and of great opportunities being turned to little account.

Being on the subject of Georgia, perhaps it may gratify the reader to receive some additional information respecting that country. An English traveller having communicated to me some authentic particulars as to the population, both Christian and Mahommedan, as well of that province as of the Caucasian regions in general, I shall proceed to repeat it.

"To explain how I was enabled to acquire information, which I scarcely think could be collected by another traveller, it may be sufficient to state that a number of accidental circumstances opened to me unexpected sources.

"The actual yearly loss of soldiers by death and desertion, particularly the former, is enormous. I never heard it estimated by the Russians themselves at less than one-tenth. I have reason to believe it to be much more, as a person who neither would exaggerate, nor could be deceived, corrected my assertion of one-tenth by repeatedly stating it as a fourth, in conversation with myself.

"This proportion was corroborated by another most competent authority, who stated that on an average 10,000

recruits arrived annually in Georgia, and I know that in a few months of the autumn of 1836, of 600 men who formed the garrison of Poti on the Black Sea, 200 died, and this was not reckoned an unusually sickly season.

"All agree in stating that nearly all the stations on the Black Sea, and most of those in Mingrelia, Imeritia, and likewise those near the Caspian, are just as fatal to the Russian soldiers as Poti is.

"I am aware I run some risk of repeating that which may be already well known, but, as I myself was astonished when I brought the pay of officers and men of the Russian army into English currency, I do not think I can err very far in noticing it here. These, and also I believe the civil servants in Georgia, receive double the pay of those who are in Russia. The silver rouble is equal to four francs.

	Silver Roubles.		£.	s.	d.
A Polkownik, or Colonel (pay annually)	750	or	123	6	8
Pad Polkownik, or Lt.-Col. „	700	or	116	13	4
Major .. .. „	600	or	100	0	0
Command allowance of Colonel and Lieut.-					
Colonel	750	or	123	6	8
Major	500	or	83	3	4
Captain's pay	425	or	70	16	8
First Surgeon's pay	750	or	123	6	8
Second „	300	or	50	0	0

"While the Russian private soldier's rations are very bad, he only receives in cash three copeks per day (less than a halfpenny), making about tenpence a month in Georgia, and half that sum in Russia, out of which I am told he is put under stoppages to defray the expense of the baggage bullocks and the barber kept by each company.

"I learned, on what I consider the best possible authority, that, a calculation being made by official people, it was found that 5*l.* 8*s.* 4*d.* a year pays, clothes, feeds, lodges, arms, and physics a Russian soldier.

"If these provinces cost Russia so large an annual expenditure in men as that here referred to, it is no less true that a very large sum in cash is sent to Tiflis from Petersburg, to cover their yearly expenditure. This sum is said never yet to have been less than fifteen millions of copper

roubles or 625,000*l.* a year, and on *excellent authority* I was assured that last year 1,050,000*l.* were sent.

"By far the most useful troops to Russia in the expeditions against the Circassians are the contingent from Mingrelia, Gooriel, and from those of the Caucasians who have been forced to submit to Russia.

"The following is a list of the principal tribes of the Caucasian mountaineers, from the Caspian to the Black Sea, and the septs or clans into which they are divided, with the numbers of each tribe, all taken from an official Russian document of 1833 and 1834:—

Chircasses,	4 clans or divisions	.. .. ..	501,000
Abasekhs,	12 „	„	109,700
Nagatai,	2 „	„	16,000
Kabardians,	3 „	„	36,000
Koomekee,	2 „	„	38,000
Chechenses,	14 „	„	198,000
Lesgees,	36 „	„	530,282
Apkhazims,	5 „	„	45,090
Swanetees,	3 „	„	25,000
Osseteens,	16 „	„	35,750
Total number of Caucasians			1,535,623

"The same document states that—

All Georgia proper, including Akhalsikh, has ..	337,143
Armenia	164,631
Imeritia	152,219
Mingrelia	61,608
Gooriel	31,067
Total Christians	746,668

Mussulman Provinces.

Karabagh	101,520
Sheki	98,508
Sheerwan	124,602
Talish	8,992
Kooba	95,198
Bakoo	31,226
Derbend	11,000
Total	471,046
Total in Georgia and Mussulman Provinces	1,217,714

"This document proves, what I suspect will surprise many, that the Caucasian independent tribes who wage continual war with Russia very considerably outnumber all the subjects of the Emperor south of those mountains.

"Besides the large college in Tiflis, Russia has established and supports eighteen schools south of the Caucasus.

"She obliges the Armenian hierarchy to educate the young candidates for the priesthood. She has made roads, such as they are, which extend in almost every direction.

"Posts regularly traverse the country. The people are becoming accustomed to obedience and restraint. Very many natives, Armenians chiefly, are in the military and civil service."

NOTE (B.). Page 67.

THE RUINED CITY OF ANI.

Ancient history of Armenia — Excursion to, and description of, Ani — Account of the fortress of Gumri — Advantage of the war to the Turks — Oppression of Armenians by Mahommedans.

THOUGH situated almost on the high road between Erzeroom and Tiflis, as well as between the latter city and Tabreez, few travellers take the trouble of stepping aside from the beaten track to view this ancient capital of the Armenians, for, scattered and wandering as they now are over the face of the earth, like Jews and gipsies, the Armenians once had a capital. They pretend that their progenitor Haïk, the great-grandson of Japhet, came from the land of Shinar to escape from the tyranny of the Mighty Hunter before the Lord, and established himself west of Van. His successors transferred the residence of the Armenian monarchs to the banks of the Arras, where it continued for eighteen centuries. From one of these, named Aram, distinguished for his heroic exploits, is derived the appellation by which the tribe is now known, although not recognised by the Armenians themselves, who adopt the name of their founder, Haïk. Armenia was subdued

by Shamcram (Semiramis), who built a city after her own name, Shemiramgerd, now Van. Subsequently the Armenian nation aided the Medes in their revolt against Sardanapalus. At length the Macedonian Alexander extinguished the Armenian monarchy, of which the dynasty of Haïk had held uninterrupted possession for so many centuries.

The Seleucidæ having been overthrown by the Parthian invaders of Persia, the latter established in that country a powerful and independent race of Parthian kings. Arsaces the Great, grandson of the founder of the Parthian empire of the same name, placed his brother Valarsaces on the throne of Armenia B.C. 150, and under this branch of the Arsacidæ, which lasted nearly five hundred years, the Armenians attained greater prosperity, and reached a higher rank in the scale of nations, than they had ever before enjoyed. The whole country was overrun by Antony B.C. 34, in his Parthian wars, which it is conjectured led him to the neighbourhood of Tabreez. When the Sassanees mounted the throne of Persia in 226, the Romans placed Tiridates on the throne of Armenia, and then it was that St. Gregory, a descendant of the Royal Arsacidæ, converted the king and his court. Armenia was rent into factions during the wars of the Romans and the Sassanians, till at length, near the middle of the fifth century, these two powers made a formal division of the country. The fire-worshipping Sassanians spared no effort to convert the Armenians to their faith. The country was desolated by Persian armies, but persecution and torture failed to overthrow Christianity in Armenia. The Magian worship having been extinguished by the followers of the Koran, for seventy years Armenia was the field of contention between the Mussulmans and the rival power of Constantinople, till at length the supremacy of the former was established. Not long afterwards, by a strange change of policy, the caliphs founded a dynasty of native tributary sovereigns, who during 160 years filled the throne of Armenia. The noble family of the Pakradians, of very ancient Jewish descent, was the source from which these monarchs were

derived. Many smaller Pakradian chiefs formed minor semi-independent principalities; but in the middle of the eleventh century the Seljookee Toorks burst into Armenia headed by their famous chiefs Toghrul and Alp Arselān, marking their track by devastation and massacre.

The latter monarch, one of the greatest of the Seljookees, was afterwards slain on his throne by an assassin. The murderer advanced towards his victim, who, confiding in his skill as an archer, refused the aid of his guards. He missed his aim and lost his life. He was buried in the city of Merve, to the north of Meshed, towards the Oxus. On his tomb were inscribed the following words, dictated by himself shortly before his death:—"Oh! ye who have beheld the glory of Alp Arselān exalted to the heavens, come to Merve, and you will see it buried in the dust." Alp Arselān in A.D. 1063 took and pillaged Ani, the capital of the Pakradian Armenian kings, with such slaughter that the streets were blocked up with bodies. Ani then fell into the hands of the Koords, from whom it was wrested by the kings of Georgia, then at the height of their power. This may be considered the termination of Armenian independence and separate existence in this part of Asia. The Moghuls and Timour completed the desolation caused by the Seljookees. The population of Armenia is scanty, but the wonder is it has not been annihilated. Its geographical position made it the battle-field of innumerable nations, beginning with the Assyrians and ending with the Russians. It was not from massacre and the other evils of war alone that Armenia suffered. The conquerors frequently forced a large share of the population from their homes: thousands were carried to Tartary and Egypt; but the chief devastator was Shah Abbas the Great, of the house of Seffi, who, to make Armenia an intrenchment against Turkey, converted it into a desert. The inhabitants were collected in the plains of Ararat, and driven like cattle across the Arras to Ispahan and other parts of Persia.

The tenacity of the Armenian character under all their afflictions excites admiration. Throughout the woes which barbarism, fanaticism, and violence could inflict on these

devoted Christians, they have clung unflinchingly to their religion and to their language. The same language is spoken by the Armenians throughout the world, and, with the exception of those attached to the Church of Rome, they all maintain the same dogmas of faith.

Happening in the year 1840 to be residing at Erzeroom, I felt a strong desire to see the last remnant of Armenian regal grandeur, by undertaking an excursion to Ani, in company with my friend Dr. Riack, of Her Majesty's Mission in Persia. With a very light equipment of clothes and bedding, and a good supply of tea and sugar, that best resource where hard continued riding is to be endured, or heat or cold to be borne, we set forth on post-horses, attended by one servant each. Wishing for variety to make a circuit, we went to the north-east for about 15 miles, and crossed a small rivulet which is entitled to be honoured with the name of Euphrates, as it proceeds from some fountains in the neighbourhood, from which springs one branch of that river. I had on a previous occasion seen these fountains, which take their rise in a small basin at the summit of very high mountains. There are several of these springs, some among them sending forth with great violence a volume of water nearly a foot in diameter and three or four feet in height. Our road continued over high mountains into the beautiful valley of Tortoom, through the midst of which runs a small river crowded on both sides with luxuriant villages surrounded with fruit-trees. The valley is terminated by a charming lake six miles long, encompassed by precipitous mountains which reach the water's edge, through a chasm of which the waters of the lake find an exit and form a splendid waterfall.

From Tortoom we turned to the north, our road, or rather path, still continuing over high mountains diversified with fertile vales, while to the west lay still higher and more rugged mountains, separating us from Batoum and the Black Sea. We reached the town of Oltee, situated in a beautiful valley of the same name: overhanging the town is a high rock, with a very remarkable and ancient-looking castle at its summit, of which the only

thing pretended to be known was, that it had been erected by the Venidik or the Genevees; it more probably was the fastness of one of the extinct race of the Delli Boys, who defied the Porte in the days of its weakness, and made plunder their occupation. Another day's hard riding brought us to Kars, twenty miles being occupied in ascending and descending very high mountains.

This is a poor though picturesque-looking town, containing, it is said, 1500 families, of which only twenty were Armenians, the Russians having carried off no less than 600 families of that race at the close of the last war. The citadel is placed on a high steep rock which completely overlooks the town, but the whole is commanded by a ridge of hills within cannon-range of the citadel. It was here, we were told, Prince Paskewitch erected his batteries at the capture of Kars during the last war. On the next occasion the besiegers found this ridge occupied: Sir W. Williams was too skilful a soldier to leave so important a post to the enemy. He fortified the ridge, and has gained a name and reputation not second to any in the present war.

The succeeding day we rode twenty-six miles over an undulating country to Ani.

This venerable relic is situated on the bank of a small stream, called Arpa Chaee, or Barley River, which separates Turkey from Russia. On approaching the ruins we were astonished to perceive the walls in as perfect a state as if they had been recently erected. These walls are double, and are of great height and thickness, with enormous towers at close intervals, all constructed of a reddish stone, cut in large blocks with the utmost regularity, and closely cemented. The towers are round and may be sixty feet in height. The entire structure, both walls and towers, is in such excellent preservation, that comparatively little repair or expense would be required to make them serviceable; I have seen nothing like them in Turkey or Persia. We observed that the gates of the two walls were not built opposite to each other, with the object no doubt of exposing an assaulting party to greater loss in proceeding from the outer to the inner gate. The site seems to have

been admirably chosen for strength and purposes of defence. The city was situated on a tongue of land, protected on the east and south by the enormous and exceedingly steep ravine through which flows the Arpa Chaee, and on the west by another ravine of similar proportions, which joins the above stream. These ravines may be 40 yards wide and 20 yards deep. The north is the only side exposed to assault, and this is defended in the manner described: even the ravines have been strengthened by a strong parapet, which runs the whole length of the faces towards the Arpa Chaee and the ravine to the west. The space inside the walls must have been very confined, and could not have admitted of a large population. Five hundred yards was the length we assigned by estimation to each face of the ravines: perhaps this was the royal fortress, and that the mass of the population resided beyond the walls. The number of hillocks outside the gates, covering perhaps the fragments of a city now lost to sight, gives colour to this conjecture; but if it were thus, what a vision does it open of the wealth and power of the Pakradian monarchs, who could erect a fortress of such dimensions for their own special security.

In gazing at the ponderous walls and deep ravines enveloping Ani, one is perplexed in reflecting by what contrivance could a horde of barbarians, like the Seljookee Toorks in 1060, surmount all these defences, and capture such formidable bulwarks. Treason or famine seems the only mode of opening these gates in the then state of the science of conducting sieges.

On passing the gates one is struck with awe on perceiving that the city does not contain a single inhabitant. All is silence and desolation. The entire space is covered with hillocks, by which the former habitations, and even the outline of the streets, could in many places be traced. At the southern extremity of the enclosure is a high mound, which is called the citadel, crowned with extensive ruins. A bridge over the Arpa Chaee, of which the remains are still in existence, connected the citadel with its left bank. Near this spot, in the stream, is a very rugged rock on which is built a castle called "Qiz Qallasee," the Maiden

or Maiden's Castle, a name almost invariably given in Persia to all castles in defiles and commanding passes.

Besides the citadel the ruins consist of an edifice of great size, in the north-west angle, which now receives the denomination of the "Palace." There are also two high columns, shaped like minarets, but of great size, which may have been towers for military purposes. Three churches complete the remains of Ani. All these buildings, walls, citadels, palace, columns, and churches are made of the same beautiful reddish stone, intermixed with black, which receives a fine polish and produces an admirable effect. Everything is constructed in the most substantial and massive manner and of first-rate masonry.

The churches are all shaped like a cross. The walls of one among them were entirely covered with scriptural pictures in fresco of rather coarse execution, but still tolerably preserved, excepting the heads, of which no doubt Mussulman zeal had deprived the figures. Time and the weather had been kinder than man at Ani, for in many parts of the building the stucco was in perfect preservation, still retaining a brilliant gloss. While we were surveying the ruins, many workmen were employed in removing the pillars and large black stones, belonging to the inside of these melancholy tabernacles, to form stoves for the Pasha of Kars; these were the only living beings in Ani. Another church of considerable dimensions was remarkable for being perfectly plain and simple, and therefore infinitely more pleasing than the ornament and tawdriness of the adjoining sacred edifices.

The reputation of the grandeur of this extinct city still survives; our guide said it contained one thousand churches, and a similar number of lamp-oil manufacturers. The adjoining country is remarkably sterile in its aspect, there being no trees within view. The sides of the immense ravine on the west side of the town are covered with excavations, which form small apartments, and which were evidently used as dwellings or as shops. At this moment one of these cavities is designated as the barber's shop,

another the baker's, &c.; shelves and tākches (a shelf cut in a wall) are visible in many of these recesses, which are now used by the Koords as dwellings in winter. The bed of this immense ravine is at this day called the Charsoo, a Persian word signifying market-place.

The impression left on us by these ruins was a doubt that they could date as far back as 800 years, and a persuasion that the devastation or abandonment of the city must have taken place at a later period than the reign of Alp Arselān. I think I have read somewhere that the ruin of Ani dates from a much later period.

Another reflection which suggested itself to us was, that, as Gumri or Alexandropol was a formidable rampart to Tiflis, and an excellent base of operations against Erzeroom, so Ani might be converted into a corresponding offensive and defensive position for Turkey. These two cities are close to each other; they are situated on the same river and similarly protected by immense ravines, and Ani has the further advantage of having massive walls ready made. With so many appliances at hand, the expense of converting this abandoned city into a fortification of great strength ought not to be heavy.

A short account of the important fortress of Gumri, as it existed sixteen years ago, since which period it has no doubt undergone great extension and improvement, will not be inappropriate here. I had myself seen it on a previous journey, though only for a short time, and further information was obtained from a trustworthy source.

Alexandropol, or Gumri, was evidently designed to be to Asiatic Turkey what Cronstadt is to the Baltic, or Sebastopol was to Constantinople and the Black Sea. It appears to be systematic with the Russian government to construct a formidable fortress at each of its remote frontiers, for whose subjugation time, labour, and an immense army are requisite. The Turkish government ought to follow the same rule; and if Ani should be found unsuited for that purpose, Kars itself might perhaps be convertible into a fortress which would defy the efforts of Russia. We too

might take a hint from the same source, and the western extremities of our eastern dominions should present similar obstacles to an intruder.

Gumri is distant twenty or twenty-five miles from Kars. It is a bustling little town, which in 1832 contained only sixty habitations, but which in 1838 had increased to 1200 houses. The fortress is situated on a plateau, elevated 100 feet above the surrounding country. It is distant about a mile from the Arpa Chaee, the small stream dividing Russia from Turkey, and running north and south, which may be considered the ditch of the western face of the fortress, the space intervening between the latter and the river being 100 feet lower. The eastern face was guarded in a similar way by a ravine 100 feet deep and 150 feet in width, at the bottom of which runs a rivulet. The fortress is about a mile in length from north to south, and about half a mile in breadth. It was intended in 1838 to connect the above two faces by a great ditch on the northern side; but it was not known if the southern face was to be defended in a similar manner. The ground in this direction is rugged; and the southern front was protected by a bomb-proof casemated battery mounting sixteen guns, constructed of dark soft volcanic rock, which hardens on exposure to the air. It was said to be intended to surround the whole of the plateau on which the fortress stands with a rampart fifteen feet high and twenty feet in thickness. Part of this rampart was already constructed. In addition to these works it was in contemplation to construct a citadel in the centre of the plateau of the same materials as the casemated battery, with extensive bomb-proof barracks. Preposterously enough, the large timber required for the works was brought from Turkey. This was in 1838, at which time 2000 men were daily employed on the works, which it was conjectured would require seven years for completion.

Such was the state, sixteen years ago, of the formidable bulwark prepared by Russia for the defence of her Georgian dominions. We may feel an assurance that at this moment these fortifications are of a nature which no effort of Turkey could disturb.

To return to Erzeroom we changed our route and proceeded by the pass of Changeneh. We forded the Aras long after dark, and found it wide, rapid, and deep. Crossing a river under such circumstances is a very disagreeable process, unless the head and stomach are in good order, as one is apt to fancy that instead of crossing the stream one is passing down with the current. We then reached the flourishing town of Kaghezmān. I never beheld orchards at all comparable with those of Kaghezmān, which really bear more resemblance to forests than to anything else. Hitherto we had been domiciled with Armenians, who almost invariably are the scapegoats for travellers in Turkey; we were now lodged in the house of a Turk well to do in the world, who looked in no small degree perplexed and out of humour when he saw two Giours take possession of his best apartment.

This war will do the Turks, above all the provincial Turks, service in more respects than saving their country. It will teach them what they did not know before,—that there are better men and braver soldiers in the world than themselves. A Turk has many valuable qualities, but his intolerable pride, self-sufficiency, and conceit relative to his religion, himself, and his nationality, render him offensive, unendurable, and almost useless. The rough rubbing of shoulders he is now going through will leave him a wiser, more reasonable, and a better man.

I was confirmed by this trip in an observation I have before made. The Armenian towns and villages require to be protected from Mahommedan travellers, particularly from such as are in the employment of Government. There is no doubt that much oppression is inflicted on these occasions, and this is one of the points to which the attention of those persons seeking to promote the prosperity of the Ottoman empire ought to be directed.

NOTE (C.). Page 101.

THE KOORDS AND KOORDISTAN.

"Eels" — Sheghaghee battalion — Estimation of English officers — Inhospitality — Misconduct and punishment of native officers — Faction fights — Niametees and Hyderees — Mode of fighting — An odd petition — Ardebil: the governor's son — Drunkenness — Shrine of Shah Ismael — Marble-pits — Maragha — A Persian gentleman — Quail-hawking — The Koords — Koordistan mountains — The Afshars — March in pursuit of plunderers — Koordish cavalry — Death of a colonel — Character of Persians — Drinking-bouts — Anecdotes illustrative of Persian character and manners.

IN 1833 I proceeded from India to Persia as second in command of a detachment of officers and serjeants sent by the government of the former empire for the drill and discipline of the Shah's army, or rather of that portion of it formed from the natives of Azerbijan. Shortly after our arrival in Tabreez we accompanied the new King, Mahommed Shah, to Tehran to assist in placing him on the throne, the possession of which was disputed by two of his uncles. This having been accomplished, the officers of the detachment were dispersed over various parts of Persia. I, with two serjeants, was sent to Azerbijan to "drill and discipline" a battalion of recruits, amounting to about 600 men, of the tribe of Sheghaghee.

The tribes in Persia are called eels—a Turkish word to distinguish them from the sedentary part of the community, not linked together by the bonds of clanship. Some of the eels are wanderers, who with their families and flocks change their quarters each summer and winter, in search of pasture, to grounds more or less distant belonging to the tribe, and which cannot be encroached on by other clans. Other eels, who once no doubt were wanderers, have become sedentary, and have devoted themselves to agriculture, but still preserving their union as tribe-men. An eel is ruled by its oojāk, or chief, and by its dooshmāls, or heads of the different teerehs or branches into which it is divided.

The Sheghaghees use two languages indifferently, Turkish and their own Lekee, a dialect of Persian.

The spot fixed on for raising this new battalion was Serāb, a fine valley lying between Tabreez and Ardebil, and seventy miles from the former city. At the desire of the Ameer Nizam, or commander-in-chief, who was also viseer of the province of Azerbijan, I proceeded to this spot, accompanied by Bala Khan, an old soldier and major, who had seen a great deal of service against the Russians. The Sheghaghees had already furnished from their tribe two battalions, which were regarded, as the Shah himself told me one day, on the march to Tehran from Tabreez, as the best in his service. His Majesty might have added to this encomium, what he once said to a foreign minister who had praised the appearance of some regiments at Tehran—"Yes," said the King, with the loud laugh he loved to indulge in, "they are excellent; and better still, they have been three years without a fraction of pay, and they never ask me for arrears." They certainly were stout, stalwart, active fellows—but so are nearly all Persian soldiers. The Sheghaghees had some claim on the Shah's gratitude. They happened to be returning from Khorassan when the King died. The pretender to the throne, on their reaching Tehran, sent out his son with a large sum of money to bribe them to enter his service. They took the money, and marched off next morning, sending notice to the real Shah that they were ready to join him. I find the following remark in my note-book: "The poor fellows are four or five years in arrears of pay."

Several of the old officers of these regiments came to see me on my arrival at Serab. They spoke in the most enthusiastic manner of Captain Christie, an English officer by whom the regiment had been raised, and who many years ago had been killed fighting against the Russians at the battle of Aslandooz.

As an example of the estimation in which English officers are held in those wild districts, I may mention that once, while still attached to the Persian army, I was travelling, and reached a solitary village, in the midst of a large plain, at ten o'clock at night, in late autumn. The villagers were most inhospitable, and refused to receive me, saying that

there was nothing to eat, that the village was full of plague, cholera, and what not. The prospect of a supperless night in the midst of a plain, in an Azerbijan autumn, was rather uncomfortable, when fortunately one of my servants discovered that the village was chiefly composed of artillerymen who had left the service. I now felt tolerably certain of supper, and I pounced at once on the artillerymen. I told them they were a low, base-born set of fellows, dogs and sons of dogs, without faith and without honour. Who, I said, half in Turkish, half in Persian—not knowing the former language well—who made you soldiers? Who taught you to fight the Russians? Who got you your pay? Who got you your rations? Was it not the English? How then dare you to treat an English officer in this way? I could hear them saying, "Wallāh, doghroo dir!" (By the Lord! it is true.) And they finished by asking pardon, protesting they were wrong. One among them took me to his house, and led the way to a large comfortable room, with an excellent fire, and filled with his female relations, wife, sisters, &c., where he said I was to pass the night, and that he would get supper ready without delay. "But," said he, "as for your servants, the sons of dogs, they may go to hell, but they shall not come here near my wife and children—but you are welcome." These sons of dogs were Persians and Mussulmans like himself, and were left to shift as they could; while the Englishman, Kafir as he was, was made a cherished guest. The whole party at length found accommodation elsewhere, as I refused to place the family to the inconvenience caused by my presence.

The only other instance of downright inhospitality I ever encountered was under circumstances exactly similar, while still in the army, and therefore travelling in somewhat humble array. I arrived late at night at a village, where quarters were peremptorily refused. Finding remonstrance and good humour unavailing, I dismounted from my horse, and, looking about in the dark as well as I could for a good house, selected one which, for a village habitation, was rather inviting. On entering the best chamber, I saw seated at a fire a young and very well-looking woman of

twenty, who seemed by no means abashed by my presence. She addressed me in Turkish, and bantered me with great good humour for occupying her house without leave. At this moment a stout young man came into the room with a sabre in his hand, and, looking very fierce, demanded why I entered his house. I felt very uncomfortable, knowing it to be a critical moment; so I walked straight up to him, and bringing forward the hilt of my sword with my left hand, whilst with the other I threw open the front of my coat to rejoice his eyes with the sight of a double-barrelled pistol in my belt, said—"Are you mad? Have you lost your senses? Why don't you send your wife away? Don't you see that I intend to remain here to-night? Is this the way you behave to an English officer?" He seemed irresolute for a moment, but at length growled a reluctant assent. Five shillings in the morning made him full of gratitude.

I had a troublesome time with my recruits, especially in the beginning. The Sheghaghees have the reputation of being a wild and rather lawless tribe, yet I found these young soldiers very tractable. Among my notes of those days I remark the following observations, which will show their condition:—"These poor fellows the serbaz (soldiers) are much to be pitied; they get no pay and only plain bread for food. They are half naked, and a great part of them are without shoes. Many among them do not come to parade, and when I discover the malingerers I punish them much against my will, but, if I did not, I should have the parade to myself. They are submissive, but not alert in obeying orders, unless such as require execution on the spot."

With all their reputed turbulence, these young soldiers displayed a great deal of patience. Notwithstanding their short commons, they bore the incessant drilling, for our time was limited, with great submission. Outrage, excepting on one or two remarkable occasions, was rare, and they endured punishment without murmuring. All this aptitude for a soldier's life was exhibited under the peculiar and trying circumstances of all the captains and lieutenants being youths of eighteen and recruits, like the rest of the regi-

ment. They were the Bey Zadeh, Dhuihne wassels, the gentlemen of the tribe, their fathers being small chiefs. Yet with all these disadvantages so intelligent are Persians, that the battalion was soon able to manœuvre very passably. My great difficulty was the presence of two youthful lieut.-colonels belonging to different and rival branches of the tribe, each of whom pretended to the chief authority, each being supported by his own sept. To these was added an intriguing veteran major, who actually invited part of the regiment to pelt with stones one of the rival colonels. A general conflict followed, in which, in endeavouring to keep the peace and part the combatants, I was near being a sufferer amid the showers of stones which flew on all sides. A few days' interval brought to Serab the Ameer e Nizam, a most excellent but weak man, whose first act was to put the intriguing major's feet into the fellak and flog him until he became insensible. Remonstrance with his Excellency on this mode of treating an officer produced from him a rejoinder that I knew nothing of Persians, and that I should learn in a short time that a Persian officer was not altogether the same as an English officer. "Did you ever see," asked the Ameer, "an English major incite the soldiers to pelt the lieutenant-colonel? If I did not act in this way I should soon be pelted myself." Such was the position of English officers in Persia twenty years ago. With no power excepting that of the lash, and such authority as from personal character they could acquire for themselves—no control over the pay or rations, which were always embezzled, or over promotion, which was always bestowed from corrupt motives—it is not surprising they did not effect more than was done. If they could not enable the Persian troops to contend successfully with the regular troops of other nations, they at all events gave the Persian artillery and infantry the means of beating an unlimited number of Afghans, Koords, and Toorkomans, or irregular Persian troops.

A farther extract from my note-book of those days may have some interest, by illustrating the condition of the Persian army, as well as the manners of that country:—

"*April*, 1835.—I have come to this village, Aspistan, in consequence of the Ameer's arrival close to it. The new battalion joined him here, as well as some men of the old battalions of the Sheghaghee regiments. Close to his tent a fight took place between two parties of the same corps. The Ameer sallied out in a tremendous rage; he beat the adjutant of the old battalion in a dreadful way, and even used his own stick most vigorously. He then tied up two majors of the new battalion to the fellak, and gave them a terrible thrashing. He abused the majors in genuine Persian, not describable in English, and poured the vials of his wrath without mercy on their wives, sisters, and daughters, in choice idiom; to all which the others made no other reply than that they were the Ameer's dogs. He then ordered their tents to be cut down as a mark of disgrace. I hear that to-morrow he will give them all dresses of honour, that being the Persian mode of expressing forgiveness."

During my abode among the Sheghaghees an occurrence took place so intimately connected with the religious sentiments of the Persians that this seems to be the proper time to describe it.

"*Serab*, *April 7th*, *Moharrem*, 1835:—To-day I went with B——, who had come to see me from Tabreez, to bathe in the warm baths of the Booz-koosh, a scraggy range of mountains, bearing the odd name of Goatkiller. On our return we found the town in an uproar. Two parties, formed from the two parishes, were drawn up, at thirty yards distance, and were pelting each other most lustily with enormous stones thrown by hand and by slings. These last were not very efficient weapons, for during the half-hour we stood looking at them the hits were very few. The wonder was, that, like the two pugnacious cats of Kilkenny renown, they were not all killed."

Moharrem is the month of which ten days are appropriated annually to solemnise the slaughter of Hoossein, the son of Fātma, daughter of Mahommed. This observance has divided all Persia into two names, for they are not sects, their opinions, belief, and religious practices being identical. They bear some analogy with the factions of Ire-

land, the Caravats and Shanavesths of Tipperary. Their names are Niametee and Hyderee, and it is strange that even well-informed people can give no explanation of the original causes of this institution, which, like everything doubtful or obscure in Persia, is referred to the time of Shah Abbas, three hundred years ago. During the ten days' duration of the solemnity, the mutual hatred of the two names is inveterate, and the concluding day, Rooz e katl, seldom passes without a fight in every city and town of Persia. After this everything returns to its former condition, animosity ceases, and intercourse is resumed as if nothing had happened. Locality determines whether one is a Hyderee or a Niametee, and a change of mahalla, quarter, or parish, produces a change of party. Thus I find I am a Niametee, while my two sergeants are Hyderees.

During the night, while the solemnity lasts, the people attend in their own parishes, and, forming themselves into circles, go round in measured time, beating their breasts, and exclaiming "Ya Hassan (another grandson of Mahommed), Ya Hoossein!" with extraordinary enthusiasm. As long as each party continues in its own parish all is peaceable; but should any one overstep the border, and shout "Shahsye!" said to be a corruption of Shah Hoossein, it is considered a challenge and the fight begins.

The eels or eelyats do not celebrate the Moharrem in this absurd manner, consequently the Sheghaghee regiment has taken no share in the fray. The quarrels of the eels arise from other causes. A young man runs away with a girl; or a sheep, a cow, or camel is stolen: or a stream of water is turned—the most fertile source of broils in Persia; and then follows a row, often a regular fight.

In the evening I wrote to Nejeff Koolee Khan, chief magistrate of the town, and head of the Hyderees, that it was his duty to interfere and prevent a tumult, possibly murder. He wrote in answer a most humble letter, assuring me that I was not acquainted with the villanies of the Niametees.

8th Moharrem.—This morning Bala Khan, Meer Sedr-uddeen, Meerza Rāmezān, Meerza Ghaffār, and a number of

inferior people, called on me to devise means for preserving the peace. They were evidently in great alarm, and said that they looked to me to prevent violence, as the Hyderees had called in aid from the surrounding villages by orders of Nejeff Koolee Khan, and had sworn vengeance against the Niametees to-day. I told them all I could do was to offer advice, to which no one seemed disposed to listen. My Turkish teacher from Tabreez was in a great fright, and proposed that we should mount our horses, and take an excursion into the country; for, said he, "I perceive there will be a row, and they may perhaps attack us."

Before noon the Hyderees assembled in great force on their own ground and on the tops of the houses, where they shouted, and bellowed, and abused, without cessation or compunction, the mothers and wives of the Niametees, who remained quiet and silent in their houses. Encouraged by this, the Hyderees advanced and took possession of a Niametee mosque, and a detachment advanced over the tops of the houses to where I was living, and began slinging stones into my courtyard. "Kiupek Oghleeler, you sons of dogs!" shouted my ferocious cook, Gool Mahommed; "how dare you insult an English gentleman?" "Bilmadiq Wallāh—We did not know it," was the submissive reply as they retired.

9th Moharrem.—This morning early Nejeff Koolee Khan, Bala Khan, and several other people of both parties, called on me. Ismāël Khan and Imam Koolee Khan, two chiefs from the neighbouring villages, and both Niametees, having heard of the jeopardy of their faction yesterday, had come to their assistance with their followers. The Hajee was an aq seqqāl, or white-beard; the other was a stout, wild, and ferocious-looking fellow. Each party tried to impress me with the opinion that they were very pacific, and that the other party alone was to blame. After much talking they took leave, and soon after we heard loud yells of Shakhsye. We went out, and saw a body of 200 or 300 men, advancing over the plain, on seeing whom the Niametees went out to Istikbald, and ushered them into the town with shouts and antics, standards, and flags flying. Each man had a large

stick, and a piece of carpet or old coat to keep off the stones. With yells and screams they took post near the mosque, in line of battle opposite to the Hyderees, who mustered strong, but seemed depressed. The latter got ready for action by taking off their coats, and wrapping them round their left arms. Both parties now shouted and yelled, and fast and furious flew from side to side epithets which it is needless to transcribe. They defied each other by dancing a figure meant for a challenge. They threw their caps in the air, flinging their sticks after them, and then took a leap with a yell. I thought for a moment I had thrown off a dozen years of life, and that once more I was standing in a glen of the Galtees; but I soon awoke from my dream, for the accents were not those of Tipperary, but of Alp Arselan, Chengeez, and Timour. At last the fight began in earnest, and we had a good view from the top of a house. After some time two Niametees were carried off badly wounded; a Hyderee was knocked down, and a party rushed at him to kill him, but the intercession of Meer Sedr-ood-deen saved his life. After an uproar and fight of two hours a Niametee got a blow on the head from a stone, which knocked him dead. Nevertheless the Niametees gained the day, for they drove back the Hyderees to the bazar, which they sacked, as being chiefly filled with the property of that obnoxious party. Each side seemed to muster about 400 men. They fought in detached squads, very much after the fashion of Persian cavalry and Persian dogs.* When one party made an advance the other retired,

* It is highly amusing to witness a combat between two parties of the numerous dogs residing near the slaughterhouses outside the walls of a Persian city. They live in communities of 40 or 50 in a pack, 80 or 100 yards distant from each other. Some fresh offal brings on a feud. Four or five dogs rush out as if to assault the opposite party, but gradually diminishing the pace as they approach. Seeing this slackness, six or eight of the enemy sally forth, the former retreat at full speed, and the same takes place on the other side, and so on backwards and forwards without ever coming to close quarters, the non-combatants howling and yelling furiously all the time. The Koords fight in exactly the same manner; at least their mock combats, no doubt a true representation of real battles, are so conducted. I remember once ridiculing a Koordish chief for this harmless mode of

and so on alternately, something like the boys' game of prison-bars. The death of the man seemed to frighten both factions, for they gradually withdrew from the field.

On my return home in the afternoon of the same day I witnessed a curious and amusing trait of Persian character. An old villager ran up to me, crying, "You are welcome. You are welcome. I am your sacrifice. I have a petition to make to your service. I want justice, and you have come, by the help of the Prophet, to give it to me. I have got a wife, the mother of eight children. A week ago I gave her a drubbing, and she ran off to her own village. Her friends, instead of restoring my wife, are going to make me pay the dowry and force me to divorce her. This is most contrary to equity, and against the law, and I make this petition in your service that I may receive justice." On inquiring the cause of disagreement, he replied that, having bought her eight yards of beautiful English chintz, she abused him, and called him son of a dog for purchasing less than twelve: thereupon he had beaten her soundly with the halter of his bullock. In the skirmish she had pulled out a part of his beard. "Here it is," said he, producing it from his pocket, "and I shall exhibit it against her, after my death, at the day of judgment." A Persian invariably preserves these memorials of his brawls and grievances, to be brought in evidence against the aggressor at the time mentioned above. I remember a servant of the Mission, in a fit of excitement from a reprimand he had received from me, pulling out of his pocket, carefully rolled up in numerous coverings of linen, a tooth which, many years before, one of my predecessors had dislodged from its tenement under great provocation. He was keeping it for the rooz-kiamet, the day of judgment.

It may seem strange that a man whose position was simply that of a regimental captain in the Indian army should have been so often appealed to by both parties in a

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fighting, telling him that European cavalry, when good on both sides, charged home in a line, and that the Koords ought to do the same. That would never do, said he, "Kheilee adam kooshteh mee shewed" —a great many people would be killed.

matter not only not military but purely religious. The answer is plain. Both parties knew well that any report I might make would be exactly in conformity with truth, or what I believed as such, and that the testimony of an English officer would be decisive.

10th Moharrem.—This is the last day of mourning, the day of massacre, but the town was as silent as if it had no inhabitants, both parties having gone to make their complaints at Tabreez, where the highest bribe will carry the day.

The city of Ardebil, where the founder of the Seffavee or "Sofi" race of kings is interred, being only fifty miles distant, I took the opportunity of riding over to visit it. The town is situated in a plain crowned on the north by the chain of the Elboorz, from the summit of which the Caspian, distant forty miles, is often visible. It is large and straggling, with a population of 25,000, and a good bazar. Owing to the elevation, the temperature was so cold that, even on the 2nd of August, I was forced to make use of woollen clothes.

The governor was absent on a tour, but his son did the honours. He gave himself an impromptu invitation to dine with me in the evening, and fortunately brought his dinner with him. His conversation revealed the object of his visit, wine and brandy being the only topics on which he would converse; but he was sorely discomfited when I produced one bottle of wine, my entire stock. He brought with him one of his boon companions, who, when helping himself to wine, observing a drop at the mouth of the bottle, stretched out his tongue and licked it up. A Persian has no sense of moderation in his cups. Once he acquires the habit of using wine, which in the large towns is a very general practice, he never drinks but to get drunk. Men of this kind are usually freethinkers in religion as long as they are in good health, and pretend to laugh at the Prophet's prohibition. I knew one Persian gentleman, a shocking drunkard but rather religious, who often bewailed to me his unfortunate propensity. "I know it is wrong," he used to exclaim; "I know I shall go to Je-

hennam; every day I make a towbeh (an act of repentance), and every night that rascal, my appetite, gets the better of me."

The shrine of Shah Ismaël the Great is contained in a decayed mosque built by his great-grandfather Sheikh Seffi, a saint of great renown, from whom the name of the dynasty is adopted. His tomb adjoins that of the valiant monarch who at the age of fourteen began his career of conquest.

The saint seemed to receive more veneration than the soldier. On entering the cell where his remains repose, which I did without impediment, I observed several moollas reciting their prayers and counting their beads, and from time to time entering into conversation with each other, according to Mussulman practice when engaged in their devotions. The tomb lay under a solemn dome, to which many lamps were suspended, but everything seemed in a state of decay. In the cell of Shah Ismaël, over his tomb, there was a large box of sandal-wood shaped like a coffin, inlaid with filigree ivory, which had been sent from India by Hoomeyoom Shah, as a mark of gratitude for the asylum he had once received in Persia from a descendant of Shah Ismaël. Three swords hung from the dome, one of which might be perhaps the veritable weapon wielded by the warlike monarch at the great battle of Chalderan, near Bayazeed, where he received a bloody defeat from the Turkish Sultan Selim. The Turks are described to have connected their long array of guns by chains, which broke the vigour of the onset of the Persian cavalry. Shah Ismaël led in person a headlong charge, in which, with a single cut of his sabre, he divided the chain. The Shah is said never to have smiled after having sustained this defeat.

Close to the tomb was a large chamber containing an enormous quantity of blue china of all shapes and sizes, the offering of Shah Abbas to his great ancestor. When any one gives a charitable feast to the poor—a common practice among the Persians—he is entitled to make use of this china, which, consequently, is in a perpetual state of diminution. The shrine was also endowed with a large and

rich library, of which, when Ardebil was occupied by the Russians in the last war, they carried off above a hundred of the most valuable manuscripts, under the pretence of taking copies, but which, with an obliviousness savouring strongly of Muscovy, they forgot to restore. I fear the two great curiosities of this library, a Koran six hundred years old, which two men could hardly lift, and another Koran in part written by Ali himself, shared the same fate.

My battalion having marched to Tehran, I returned to Tabreez, where I found plague and cholera raging with violence, so I left the city as soon as possible, and started on my vocation of "drilling and disciplining the Persian army" to Ooroomeeya, a large town on the west side of the lake bearing the same name, otherwise called Shahee, and for variety I travelled by the longer route on the eastern side of that fine sheet of water. The face of the country presented a remarkable contrast to the desolate, arid prospect generally presented in a Persian landscape. The villages were numerous, surrounded by splendid gardens filled with the delicious fruits for which Azerbijan is renowned even in Persia.

Midway from Tabreez to the city of Maragha I passed near and paid a visit to the petrifactions well known under the name of "Tabreez or Maragha marble." They are distant about a mile from the lake, and consist of several pits or ponds twenty yards wide and eight or ten feet deep. The marble lies in parallel layers, several inches intervening between each layer, the first being about four feet from the surface. Some of the pits were dry, owing doubtless to extensive excavation. The stages of petrifaction were plainly observable from a thickening of the water like incipient iced cream to solid ice, to which it bore considerable resemblance. The marble is of a whitish colour, with large veins or streaks of various tints. It is excavated in slabs of considerable size, and is capable of receiving a polish equal to statuary marble. At the Mission-house in Tabreez a ponderous table, highly polished, affords a good specimen of this mineral substance. The same kind of petrifaction is to be seen, it is said, at the hot springs of

Anguani, near Albano, within a few miles of Rome, and also at Pestum. Perhaps the petrifactions of Maragha, like those of Italy, are formed by calcareous springs precipitating the limestone they hold in solution. The transparency of these petrifactions makes it possible that what is termed *marble* may be, in fact, alabaster, in which sulphur was the agent instead of carbon.

Maragha is sixty miles from Tabreez. The enormous gardens in which it is enclosed are its only ornament. Tradition makes it one of the most ancient cities of Persia; but now, like most towns in that country, all is decay. It was here that, about the middle of the thirteenth century, Hoolakoo Khan, the grandson of Chengeez Khan, after conquering Persia, established his capital, and erected his famous observatory, which now has disappeared, and where, under the superintendence of Nassr ud deen, were completed the astronomical tables known throughout the East under the name of Eelkhanee, or Lord of the Eels, that is, his patron Hoolakoo.

My friend and I lived with a gentleman of rank and wealth, but of a very eccentric character, who was also the colonel of a regiment, and who went by the name of Dellee (or mad) Khan. His conversation was limited to the subjects of shooting and hunting, in which occupations he seemed to have spent his life. He was a warm admirer of the juice of the grape; and, as Persians indulge in their potations before dinner, he was generally in a high state of good humour at the conclusion of that meal. On one occasion he offered me a large bribe to throw Ooroomeeya overboard and remain at Maragha to bring his regiment into order. On another, he told us he was going to take a fresh wife, whom he described to us very minutely, although he had never seen her; and showed us a love-letter, either from the young lady herself or from her brother. Every evening, after he had eaten, drunk, and talked enough, he used to wish us good night, saying he would go to the anderoon (the haram) and have a chat with the women. In Hindoostan a Mussulman gentleman would rather die than make such an allusion; but in Persia there is far

from being an equal reserve. The afternoon was spent in that dullest of sports quail-hawking. A dozen of horsemen carried each a sparrowhawk on his wrist, and whenever a bird rose the nearest hawk was thrown at it. The hawk made his rush, hit or miss, and there was an end of the matter, as the quail dips immediately if not struck by its pursuer. On one occasion the wrong hawk was thrown, which allowed the quail to escape, and this mistake roused the violent wrath of the Khan, who proposed to put the hawksman to death, asking my companion and me if that were not the proper punishment.

From Maragha we went to the southern part of the lake, which formed a portion of the district of Souk Boolak belonging to the Perso-Koordish tribe of Mikree. The Koords were very civil; they gave us good quarters, invited us to walk in their gardens, and brought out their horses for our inspection. The town of Souk Boolak being only a few miles distant, we thought so good an opportunity was not to be lost of seeing a Koordish chief and his little court in all their wildness and freedom, unsophisticated by Persian manners. We travelled along the pleasant banks of the Jaghataï, a river of some size for Persia, and which falls into the lake. On arriving, we sent to the chief, Abdoollah Khan, to request we might be furnished with quarters, which were immediately assigned to us, and in a short time an excellent, ample, and multifarious breakfast was sent by our host. We then went to visit him in his deewān khāna, or hall of audience, where he received us in state, surrounded by fifty or sixty Koords and moollas, his retainers, relations, and friends; but, to our disappointment, instead of the stately, redoubtable Koord we had prepared ourselves to see, we found Abdoollah Khan had transformed himself in manners, dress, and appearance, into a Persian. A long conversation followed, in which the whole company joined.

The appearance of a Koord of the upper class is very striking. His face is somewhat Grecian, but thin, resembling the heads to be seen at Shahpoor and Persepolis of the ancient Persians, from whom he is doubtless de-

scended. His person is meagre, like that of an Arab. He wears an enormous turban, generally a shawl; but among the Mikrees it is a particular manufacture of wool and silk, imported from Moosul, striped red and white, with a long fringe of red hanging down on the shoulders, and making a very strange appearance. His trousers are of enormous size, showing that the owner is a horseman, not a pedestrian. He wears a short jacket, and over all the loose Arab abbā, black or white, made of camel's-hair, and in his girdle the indispensable dagger. The Koords are a grave people in public, though among themselves they are cheerful, and fond of various pastimes. They speak with loud, boisterous voices, like men accustomed to pass their lives in the open air.

My companion, who was engaged in commerce, had an eye to business, when he beheld and examined these Koordish turbans, and proposed to himself to drive the Moosul manufacture out of the market by an importation from England. I had some doubt of its success, for fashion has its influence in Souk Boolak as well as in London or Constantinople, where Manchester has never been able to extirpate the genuine fes of Morocco.

From Souk Boolak we travelled through a very wild desolate country back to the lake through the district of Sooldooz. The second day we passed near a Koordish encampment, some of the inhabitants of which came running towards us inviting us to be their guests, but, not liking their appearance, and knowing that plundering Koords often encamp near the road as being more convenient for their game, we declined. A Koord is not a man of honour like an Arab, who gives you a fair start from his tent before he attacks; neither is he so bad as that vilest of all tribes, the Toorkomans, a compound of treachery and false hospitality.

In Sooldooz we saw nothing remarkable excepting two small fresh-water lakes containing immense fish of the carp kind. Next we had before us an object of untiring admiration in the Koordistan range of mountains running north and south; they were covered with snow halfway to the

base; and I know nothing that can cope with the grandeur of a great mountain thus arrayed. What can equal the mighty Himalaya? Who can forget those monarch mountains that has once beheld them? Their greatness, their stillness, and their solemnity fill the mind with the idea of immensity and eternity. The ocean by its motion and its murmurs fails to excite conceptions of equal depth. The Koordistan range cannot compete with the Himalaya, still they are noble mountains, and full of interest from the ancient races, Christian and Koord, inhabiting them.

Our road led us close to the lake, lifeless and still as that of Palestine, the intense saltness rendering it impossible for fish or other animals to exist in its waters. Although its shores are not enriched with wood, its appearance is pleasing from the islands with which the central part is studded. The approach to the town of Ooroomeeya is highly picturesque; it is situated in a fine plain bearing the same name, with the mountains of Koordistan on one side and the lake on the other. The cultivation of this valley is very rich. For twelve miles it is surrounded with gardens, intermingled with melon-grounds, cotton and tobacco fields: the latter, of high estimation for chibouk-smoking, is sent in large quantities to Constantinople; but for the kalīān, or water-pipe, the tobacco of Sheeraz is the only thing tolerated in "good society," and is of a flavour and delicacy which would reconcile it to the regal olfactories of the first James himself.

I found my regiment of Afshars, amounting only to 200 or 300 men, in the same condition as the Sheghaghees when I first joined them, fresh from the plough; but as several old soldiers of the same tribe well capable of drilling were present, and the colonel, himself a veteran, co-operated with hearty good will, everything went on smoothly, and we made that rapid progress in our military acquirements which may always be expected from a Persian when he has fair play. A Persian is sometimes called the Frenchman of the East, from his intelligence, his quickness, his social qualities, and to these may be added the same aptitude for arms which distinguishes the Gallic warrior. Though he

never attains the wonderful precision of an English soldier—I doubt if he ever could—he has a very satisfactory readiness in comprehending and attaining the really essential points required in a regiment of infantry. A single battalion has a perfect facility in forming a line, or square, or column, even when unaided by European officers; but when it comes to be increased to a large body, and is required to move, then indeed it is chaos; they settle the difficulty by not moving at all.

The Sheghaghees are called a wild tribe, but the Afshars of Ooroomeeya are ten times wilder and more turbulent, owing in part, no doubt, to their proximity to the Koordish frontier, and to the constant broils and skirmishes in which they are engaged with those marauders. In strong contrast with the quietness or apathy so remarkable in a Turkish city, these Toorks, when freed from parade, seemed to devote themselves to quarrels, and, as they never quarrelled without yelling and shouting, the whole town, or at least their part of it, resounded with their frays and their most indecent abuse of each other. Their ever-ready kamma, a most formidable cut-and-thrust dagger, was always at their sides to make it a word and a blow; yet there was a great deal of method in their wrath. A thrust from a kamma is almost certain death, and this they are so careful to avoid inflicting, that amid all their fighting I never saw a wound of that kind, though there was a most abundant harvest from the edge of the weapon.* Another of their practices was to rob and pilfer in the bazar in broad daylight; meat, vegetables, and other eatables were not safe from their clutches; but above all a good lambskin-cap had irresistible attractions in their eyes, the abstraction being usually accomplished by first knocking down the owner of the

* This dagger is often a foot and a half in length, and upwards of two inches wide at the broadest part, and very heavy. It is the favourite weapon of the Lezghees of Daghastan. The blade generally contains appropriate inscriptions, inlaid and gilt. One in my possession is adorned with the following,—"I am sharper than the wit of Plato: I am more murderous than the eyebrow of a young damsel."

coveted spoil. The lash, therefore, was in constant requisition for the first month of my sojourn.

Besides their turbulence, these Afshars, officers and men, were the most drunken set of fellows that I ever encountered. Drinking is not an uncommon vice in the Persian army; but at Ooroomeeya, where wine is abundant and tolerably good, it passed all bounds, and I have reason to believe that the precept of the Prophet was more or less set aside by all classes, and that, not satisfied with purchasing wine from the Christian community, they proceeded to the length of manufacturing it in their own houses.

The object of these notes being to convey an idea of Persian character under phases and in circumstances not usually accessible to ordinary travellers, I think that design will be best fulfilled by making extracts from a note-book which I kept during my residence at Ooroomeeya.

"*Sept.* 1*st*, 1835.—I am always fated to be at strife with the ruling people, and whether it is their fault or mine I am at a loss to determine. The contest on the present occasion is caused by the Beglerbegee, the Governor, wanting to thrash the soldiers for the disturbances they make in the bazar, while I insist that no one shall thrash them excepting myself. These Afshars are great rascals and deserve drubbing right and left.

"We flogged four fellows to-day, one for stealing a lamb, another for appropriating a fowl, and two for fighting and stabbing. Three officers came drunk to parade; I made them over to the colonel, who punished them, after the fashion of the country, by a severe drubbing.

"*Oct.* 2*nd*.—The delicacy or reserve so observable in India with regard to females exists by no means to the same extent in this country. The men, even those of high rank, speak without any reserve of their wives and sisters, &c. The colonel of this regiment often talks to me of his wife, and gives me curious details of his domestic arrangements, which, however, do not bear repetition. He visits me frequently at sunset, accompanied by three or four bottles of wine and a couple of dozen of cucumbers, all of which he finishes before he retires to his own house to dinner. This

is the manner in which a Persian delights to take his potations; give him in addition a greensward, a purling stream, a gentle shower, a singer or two to troll out a catch *à la nightingale*, a pleasant companion, and he is in paradise.

"*Oct. 26th.*—Intelligence arrived this morning that Mergewer, one of the districts of Ooroomeeya, had been plundered the previous night by a large body of men belonging to the Meer of Rewandooz, a rebellious subject of the Sultan, living in the mountains of Koordistan in an almost inaccessible hill-fortress. After three hours' delay three rounds of ammunition per man were distributed to us, and after a terrible uproar we marched out of the town. Here I halted and protested I would not move a step farther unless flints were supplied. Three more hours having elapsed, the Governor collected from the bazars one flint per man, wretched things, fit for pocket-pistols. At length we moved towards Mergewer, and at night arrived at a village, where we halted. Next day in the afternoon information reached us that 4000 men of the marauders had gone in the direction of a large village with the design of plundering. It was sunset when we started, but we hoped to reach it in two hours, being only six miles distant. Soon after we marched it began to rain; we then lost our road, and passed over innumerable streams, each of whose bridges was a single plank; and as Persian soldiers detest wetting their feet, they crossed over in single file. We were five hours on the road; it rained as it does in India and was exceedingly cold. Half the soldiers did not come in that night. Having no pouches, their cartridges were carried in the pockets of their large linen trousers. They were dressed in jackets of the same material, without coats or protection of any kind from the cold; but the power of endurance in a Persian soldier is inexhaustible.

"The Koords did not make their appearance, and not for two days was it ascertained that they had gone to their own side of the mountains. Thus terminated our campaign, and fortunately for us it was a bloodless one. Only three days previously had these recruits received their muskets, and fully half of their number now saw a weapon of that kind

for the first time in their lives. In endeavouring to gain an insight into the use of a ball-cartridge, there was a general inclination to insert the ball first; and when once they had put the rusty old flint-musket on full-cock, few among them could get it out of that condition without calling for assistance; yet they manœuvred well.

"During our stay we were joined constantly by parties of thirty or forty horsemen, which in all amounted to about 400 cavalry; of these the Toorks looked worthless, and the Koords pretty good. The latter were chiefly of the tribe of Shekak. The large and variegated turban of the Koord looks well; so does he too, with his wild, expressive, manly countenance; but they are shocking ruffians. Their arms are a spear and sword, and, when they can afford the purchase, a pair of long Turkish pistols in their belt. They prefer riding on mares, either because they make less noise than horses in a marauding excursion, or from an idea of their supporting fatigue better. Their horses are small but hardy creatures, of Arab blood. Several of the chiefs pretended to be of Arab descent, though without much foundation for the assumption; yet they look like Arabs, thin, wiry, sinewy fellows. Their manners were very agreeable.

"It is a fine sight to see a body of 300 or 400 Koordish cavalry in movement proceeding on a chapow or marauding expedition. They move in a compact body, making great way over the ground, at a pace half-walk, half-trot, like the Afghans; their spears are held aloft with the black tuft dangling below the point; their keen looks, loud eager voices, and guttural tones, give them a most martial air. In front are the chiefs, and by their side are the kettle-drummers beating their instruments of war with vast energy; they always lead the way.

"During this trip I lived with, and saw a good deal of the Persian military khans, and I preserve a pleasant recollection of their character in general. They can, when need be, lie down with perfect unconcern in their boorommas or rough great-coats and go to sleep. Bread, cheese, and a melon suffice for breakfast; and dinner was a pilaw, or something of that kind. They like to have on the tray

several little dishes, such as cucumbers, sliced melons, pickles, of which last they are enormous consumers to counteract the effect of their greasy dishes. They hate being alone at night; they sit up late, talk a great deal, and find great pleasure in abusing their absent acquaintances.

"The colonel of this regiment finished his earthly career the day after our return, and the cause of his death affords a good specimen of Persian manners and customs. The night of his return from our expedition he got drunk according to his usual practice and quarrelled with his wife. The cause of the dispute was a rebuke from her that he should propose to sleep in the beroon (meaning the part of the house not used as the haram) when he had a wife in the anderoon. This observation roused the wrath of the colonel, who wanted to stab his wife, but, being prevented, wisely stabbed himself in the thigh, close to the groin; this was at midnight. In the morning his relations begged of me to visit him, which I did, accompanied by a foreign practitioner living in Ooroomeeya. We found him greatly reduced from loss of blood, cold extremities, and pain in the stomach. The apparently judicious course was to maintain his system, but the doctor adopted another treatment, and ordered him a dose of salts. The poor colonel called as loudly as his state would let him for 'poonch;' and of the two I am sure his prescription was the best. He died that night, and was a loss to his men, for, in spite of his propensity to wine, he was active and energetic and indifferent honest.

"*Nov. 20th.*—I begin to think it hopeless to endeavour to establish Nizām—the word used to denote a regular army in Persia. Before my arrival here, the colonel of this regiment reported to the Ameer Nizam that 500 men were borne on his muster-rolls; I have been here three months and they now amount to 320 men. Nothing can exceed the difficulty I have had in obtaining money and bread for the men—bread I do get and some money, but only by force of disputing and quarrelling. Winter has now approached; these poor fellows suffer exceedingly in their linen garments, and not more than half their number can be found

for parade. An order has come to dismiss the regiment and send the men to their homes, so I am to decamp. This is the Persian notion of a 'regular army.'"

My residence among the Sheghaghees and the Afshars threw me naturally a good deal into the society of the upper and middle provincial classes of Persia—the lower ranks of khans, men of small landed property, which they themselves superintended—that infinitely numerous class called meerza, to which every one possessed of the accomplishments of reading and writing, who is not a moolla, or a merchant, or a tribeman, seems to belong. My intercourse with them gave me a favourable impression of their dispositions. As a man of the world, a Persian is generally a very agreeable and rather amiable person, unless when his insatiable greediness of power, money, or intrigue, is excited, at which time he is a bad specimen of humanity, and will pause at no wickedness; yet nowhere does one hear so much talking and praise of goodness and virtue. As the normal state of two-thirds of the nation is an avidity for power and money, their moral state may be conceived. When not engaged in the indulgence of the above and one or two other propensities, the dolce far niente existence has irresistible attractions to a Persian. His life is spent in talking, and the more public the talk the more acceptable it is to him. Without this seasoning he can neither plan nor do anything, whether it be to pay a visit to his neighbour, declare war against the Sultan, or murder a Russian minister. So national is this habit, and so highly is it valued, that they seldom discuss a man's character, moral and intellectual, without adding "he is a very agreeable man in conversation," or the reverse. We frequently used to take excursions on horseback of some miles to a garden, vineyard, cucumber or melon ground. They seemed unable to ride quietly along the road, some rushing forward to throw the jereed, others to play at ky kaj. If an unfortunate sparrow or lark was detected wondering at the cavalcade, hawk in hand he was pounced upon. If a tree or a stream looked at all inviting, a proposal was often made to buy a lamb from a neighbouring flock; he was soon cut up into

small bits, a fire was kindled, and a ramrod formed the spit. So ready are they for these rural culinary arrangements, that each man carries a little spit and a knife attached to the sheath of his kamma, or dagger. Or they would get a quantity of melons, in which fruit they pretend to be great connoisseurs, and open fifty before they found one to their taste. But talking—"bald disjointed chat"—was the staple of everything. Altogether they are pleasant fellows for a space.

But their amusements are said not to be always quite so harmless. In their drinking parties they are reported, among even the highest classes, to exceed all bounds of discretion. Half a dozen boon companions meet at night. The floor is covered with a variety of stimulating dishes to provoke drinking, for which no provocation whatever is required; among these are pickles of every possible variety, and salted prawns or cray-fish from the Persian Gulf—a food which ought to be an abomination to a true Sheah. Singers and dancing-boys enliven the scene. A Persian despises a wine-glass; a tumbler is his measure. He has an aversion to "heeltaps," and he drains his glass to the dregs, with his left hand under his chin to catch the drops of wine, lest he should be detected next morning in respectable society by the marks on his dress. They begin with pleasant conversation, scandal, and gossip; then they become personal, quarrelsome, abusive, and indecent, after the unimaginable Persian fashion. As the orgies advance, as the mirth waxes fast and furious, all restraint is thrown aside. They strip themselves stark naked, dance, and play all sorts of antics and childish tricks. One dips his head and face into a bowl of curds, and dances a solo to the admiring topers; while another places a large deeg, or cooking-pot, on his head, and displays his graces and attitudes on the light fantastic toe, or rather heel.

I shall conclude this digression by a few anecdotes illustrative of Persian character and manners. In a long intercourse with Persians, one is apt to imagine that there is no such thing as conscience throughout the land; but this is a mistake. It does exist; and if the examples of its influence

are not often met with, a Persian would say the reason is that the occasions are wanting. "You English" (once said to me a Persian, a diligent student in the scandal, gossip, and politics translated for the Shah from English newspapers by an Englishman whom he retains in his service for that purpose) "are perpetually sneering at the wickedness of Persia, as if England were all goodness. Yet where in the world are such wretches to be found as in that paragon country of yours, where wives, husbands, fathers, mothers, sons, and daughters, are for ever poisoning and murdering each other for a few shillings; where a man cannot let his land as he pleases without being murdered; where people slay each other for some difference in the dogmas of the same religion; where the most inconceivable schemes are invented to perpetuate fraud and swindling, such as never entered into the imagination of any other people; where in one city alone there are almost 100,000 women of known impropriety; and where you are everlastingly boasting of your own morality and superiority?" "Khan e azeez e men. My worthy khan, it is true, quite true, that we are a wicked race; but the difference between us and you is this,—that with all our enormous vice there is a vast deal of virtue in England: tell me the number of good men in Tehran."

But to my illustrations. A man once rushed into Mr. N——'s room at Tabreez, and, throwing five shillings on the table, exclaimed, "Take it, take it; thank God I have got rid of it. I have had no rest for a month." This was a penitent glazier who had overcharged him, but whose conscience would not sleep.

B—— told me a story which puts the Persian character in a curious light. A very respectable merchant, one who sometimes paid him 1000*l.* in cash, once called on him and said he had a private communication to make. When they were alone, the man displayed the utmost agitation; he trembled and his eyes started from the sockets. At length he said, "For two months I have not slept, owing to an injury I once did to you. Do you remember that two months ago I, with some other merchants, was looking at some china tea-sets belonging to you? On that occasion I

stole a teacup and saucer, which I put in my pocket. Though I am ready to expire from confusion, I find it necessary for my peace of mind to own my fault. I have not slept since, and I beg you to make this lawful to me." * From agitation, these words were uttered with difficulty. B—— asked him what could induce a man like him to commit such an act? to which he answered, that he could ascribe it only to the villany and malice of the devil.

B—— gave me an account of a dinner at which he was present last night. Agha ——, the magistrate of the parish, was the host, and the guests were A—— Khan, a man of very high rank, H—— Khan, and Meerza M——. Three of the party became perfectly intoxicated, the others gambled until the losers had no more to lose, and what they did lose was money borrowed on the spot from B——. The language they used to each other was beyond measure obscene. Accusations of cheating, perfectly true for that matter, were bandied to and fro, and daggers were drawn more than once. So much for the fashionable society of ——.

There has been a three days' illumination of the bazar at —— in honour of the capture of Sheeraz. The bazars were prettily lighted up and ornamented with shawls, tinsel, handkerchiefs, &c., hung up in the shops, while the people seemed to amuse themselves with singing, playing on the tambourine, &c. We met —— Khan, beglerbegee or governor in the street, and strolled about with him. He was not only perfectly drunk, but he even ventured to drink wine in the bazar in a room open to the view of the public. He boasted of having collected 40 tomans that night by suppressing rows, fines for not lighting, &c. As we went along, whenever the people did not clap their hands and sing to show their joy, he laid about on their heads with his stick with his own hands, and he finished his blackguardism by

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* "Making lawful" means making a gift of all peculations and thefts, so that no account may be demanded at the day of general judgment. A discharged servant usually adopts this precaution.

—— writes from Ooroomeeya that a Nestorian girl has been seized by a Mussulman, who wants to force her to become a Mahommedan. This is the second instance of a similar kind within a short time. He also writes word that a child was found dead at the door of a Jew, and that there was no doubt of the death being natural. The mob assembled and insisted on slaying the 300 Jewish families residing at Ooroomeeya. They were pacified by being allowed to burn one whom they selected for that purpose.

It is a prevalent belief in Persia that the Jews offer annually a Mussulman child in sacrifice, and this calumny is constantly made the pretext of oppressing that race.

This is not the first time I have heard of a victim suffering the penalty of burning, which seems to be a favourite discipline among the Afshars. A Nestorian tenant would not or could not pay his rent, so his Afshar landlord made a bonfire of him on his own thrashing-floor.

The Ameer gave me a strange narrative of a disturbance in Tehran. A Nestorian in the Russian regiment* wounded a shopkeeper in the bazar. While the bystanders endeavoured to seize him, he killed two men and wounded three others. The culprit was taken before the king, who ordered him to be conveyed to the square and put to death, and his Majesty sent his Ferash bashee and his Ferashes to execute the sentence. The soldiers in the square at drill, chiefly Persians, rescued their Christian comrade, thrashed the Ferash bashee, and hurried the criminal to the house of the Russian minister, who, they insisted, should intercede for the man. He did so. This ruffian was pardoned on paying the price of blood. The Russian elchee offered to contribute 300 tomans (150*l.*), but his donation was refused by the colonels of the regiments, who raised the money among themselves. It was a very curious circumstance that these Mahommedan soldiers should have interfered to save the life of a Christian, merely from the spirit of comradeship.

* Twenty years ago there was a regiment of Russian deserters in the service of the Shah. They always fought well. The regiment no longer exists.

NOTE (D.). Page 103.

TOORKOMANS.

Treaty of Toorkoman Chaee — Encroachments of Russia — Russian "protection" — Occupation of Ashoorada — Repression of Toorkoman incursions — Russian naval strength in the Caspian.

THE treaty of Toorkoman Chaee was a crushing, almost a death blow, to Persia; and yet we may rejoice that it was no worse, for the Czar was "master of the situation," his troops being at the Kaplan Kooh, ready to march into Irak. Ignorance saved Persia. Had Russia known then as well as she now does the value of Azerbijan—commercial, political, and material—its richness in corn, mineral productions, and soldiers, there can be little doubt that province, too, would have been absorbed by the "Holy" Empire.

It was not until he saw his kingdom lying prostrate that the sovereign of Persia could be induced to let loose the savings of his lengthened reign. Even then great talent, tact, and the ascendency of a strong mind over an inferior capacity, were needed to unlock his hoards. Sir John M'Neill saved Persia. Though he had then been only a few years in that country, it was to his influence and arguments alone that the Shah would yield. Russia extorted the overwhelming sum of two millions sterling on the pretence of defraying the expenses of a war provoked by her domineering attitude, and by the aggressive occupation of a portion of Persian territory.

It was by this treaty that Russia completed her boundary to the Aras, giving herself thereby easy and immediate access to the cities of Tabreez and Khoee, when the time shall be matured for the giant to take another stride in advance. The Aras does, however, make a well-defined frontier, obviating disputes in the adjustment of the line; but towards the mouth of that river Russia has disregarded this desirable object. At the previous treaty of Goolistan, in 1814, Russia had extended her territory 150 miles beyond its banks, over more than half the province of Talish. By this means the valuable Caspian province of Geelan, "the choicest province of Persia," as Hanway truly says, which

she has coveted since the time of Peter the Great, and which that monarch occupied with his forces, lies at her mercy.

When we ourselves witness the difficulty with which the vigilance of England was aroused to designs prepared at our thresholds by the sovereigns of Russia in the plenitude of their "magnanimity," our surprise need not be excited at its having slept during the progress of events in so remote and obscure a spot as Persia. It ought rather to create wonder that Russia did not profit to a greater extent by our supineness. The eyes of Russia are now open to the value of Azerbijan; so too, it may be hoped, are our own.

These were not the only blows inflicted on Persia by this memorable treaty. At the recent notable conferences of Vienna, Russia rejected with disdain, as insulting to her dignity and independence, any proposition tending to the limitation of her naval strength in the Black Sea. Let us examine her tender treatment of the dignity and independence of her weak neighbour, in a question of the same nature.

The Caspian Sea washes the coasts of the Persian provinces of Talish, Geelan, Mazenderan, Asterabad, and Persian Toorkomania. The inhabitants of these spacious territories carry on an extensive commerce, in part with the Persian ports on that sea, in part with the Russian districts on its northern and western shores. With a far-seeing policy, which anticipates all the possibilities of futurity, when Persia was gasping almost in the last throes, Russia humbled her to the dust, by forcing on her the renewal of a stipulation contracted at the treaty of Goolistan, by which she bound herself not to maintain any vessel-of-war in the Caspian Sea. Upwards of a hundred years ago an Englishman named Elton, a man of wonderful ability and resource, who had been brought up to a seafaring life, and who had previously been an officer in the Russian navy, was in the service of the Shah (Nadir), and not only commanded his naval forces in the Caspian Sea, but built ships for him on European models. The most unnautical nation in the world, with an Englishman as their leader, became dominant on the Caspian, and, as the author of the

'Progress of Russia in the East' says, "*forced the Russians to lower their flag*," and the banner with the open hand* floated triumphantly through the length and breadth of the Caspian. To preclude a revival of this discomfiture, Persia was forced to sign her degradation, and the Caspian became a Russian lake. When the Czar rendered Persia powerless on this inland sea, he was heedless of the fact that the Toorkoman pirates of the Eastern coast near the Goorgan and the Atrek were accustomed to make descents in their boats on the Persian shores, to kidnap the inhabitants and carry them into slavery. True, he was ready to make compensation, by sending his own vessels-of-war to "protect" the Persian coast from depredation; but the real meaning of imperial protection is not unknown in Persia, and for a long time this proffer was regarded in the light of the Persian fable of the frog who invited the snake to guard his dwelling. Unfortunately an event occurred several years afterwards which placed them in the poor frog's predicament, and which, though not strictly bearing on the treaty of Toorkoman Chaee, as it refers to the Caspian, may be introduced here.

The small sandy island of Ashoorada is situated in the gulf or bay of Asterabad, about twelve miles from the coast nearest to that city, which is twenty miles from the sea. In size it is about a mile and a half in length, and less than a mile in width. The water is deep in its vicinity; and its lee affords a secure shelter in a gale from any direction. Hitherto it has been uninhabited. Twelve or thirteen years ago it fell into the hands of Russia, by one of those protective processes of which we have lately heard so much. Its advantages as a naval station had not escaped the observation and cupidity of Russia. It commands the entrance to the bay, menaces that portion of the coast inhabited by the Yemoot Toorkomans, and intercepts the commerce with Mazenderan, on which the stationary tribes of that

* The banner of Persia is surmounted by an open hand, of which the five fingers are said to express Mahommed, Ali, Fatma, Hassan, and Hoossein.

race chiefly depend for subsistence. The island possesses sources of sweet spring-water, together with a climate remarkable on that coast for its salubrity. The inner side has sufficient depth of water to float a brig-of-war, within a few yards of the beach. These are some of the inducements which led to the occupation of this spot of Persian territory by the Russian government, which act was perpetrated in 1841, immediately after the catastrophe of Cabul became known. At that time Persia was ruled by Mahommed Shah, a monarch of whose wisdom much cannot be said. He had for minister a man who was half mad and whole Russian. He was a native of Erivan, in Russia, and often proclaimed himself to be a subject of that empire. This was the notorious Hajee Meerza Aghassee, who, from tutor to the royal family, was raised at once to the vezeership. Russia was asked to lend Persia for a short time one or two small ships of war, to hold in check the Toorkomans residing between Asterabad and the Toorkoman settlement of Hassan Koolee, at the mouth of the Atrek. With the most amiable and neighbourly cordiality she replied that she would save Persia all trouble, and come herself to chastise the marauders. Two vessels of war forthwith appeared, and soon after established themselves at Ashoorada, from whence they have never since moved. Complaint and remonstrance were met by counter charges of ingratitude, and by indignant expostulation at this offensive display of distrust. It is not surprising that there should be a reluctance to depart. The position is a good one; for, besides overawing the Toorkomans, it also controls Mazenderan. The most complete possession has been taken of the island. It is covered with residences, hospitals, barracks; and soil has been conveyed to it for the construction of gardens. In short, there is every evidence of permanent occupation and retention.

The sea-going Toorkomans have been brought under complete control. Some have been sent to Siberia, or to Russia Proper. Not a boat is allowed to move without a passport, under heavy penalties; and even Persian boats are under the same restriction; this, too, on the coast of

their own sea! Since the occupation of the island a consul has been placed at Asterabad, so that, with the consul on one side and the commodore on the other, Mazenderan also is on a hopeful road to protection.

True, the incursions of the Toorkomans have nearly ceased. But the Persians say, and with justice, that an occasional chepawool of these pirates was less irksome than the presence and interference of consul and commodore.

No attempt has yet succeeded for forming an establishment on the mainland among the Toorkomans. When the day for that arrives, the Goorgan will doubtless receive a preference. Its banks are on the high-road to Meshed, and are covered with the richest pastures; and the climate and the soil are suited for the production of abundant harvests of corn. No fitter spot could be found for subsisting an army, or for being made the basis of a plan of military operations to the East.

The naval strength of Russia in the Caspian is not easily ascertained with correctness. It is believed to amount to four or five small steamers and a few brigs and schooners of war, the largest not carrying more than eighteen guns; but her supremacy is as complete as that of England in the Irish Channel.

Unfortunately for Persia she has taken no share in the present war. If she had done so, her frontier would, perhaps, have undergone revision, and her sea have been made free. Even under present circumstances, perhaps, she will not be overlooked.

NOTE (E.). Page 212.

THE NESTORIANS.

Nestorian khaleefa, or bishop — Church service — Religious opinions — Preparation of a khaleefa — Their sufferings from the Afshars — American mission — French Lazarists — Sectarian disputes — Interference of Russia — Question of descent.

DURING my residence in Ooroomeeya, in the year 1835, I was brought into communication with the Chaldæan or Nestorian inhabitants, particularly the clergy of that city.

My mission being of a nature unconnected with proselytism, and addressed to the body rather than to the soul, to the making of soldiers rather than of saints, it is probable that their disclosures relative to their religion were more candid than when addressed to the missionaries of France or America. As the Nestorians have excited a good deal of attention from their geographical position, preserving their Christianity in the seclusion and amid the barbarism of the Koordistan mountains, I make some extracts from my note-book of those days. If the result of my inquiries sometimes differs from those of the American or French missionaries, I cannot explain the cause of the discrepancy excepting in the manner I have alluded to above.

September 4th, 1835. — A Nestorian khaleefa, or bishop, called on me to-day. His only language was Kaldanee, the same word doubtless as Chaldæan, which occasioned a troublesome double interpretation from that language to Turkish, and then to Persian. He was a strange-looking member of the episcopacy. He wore an enormous red-and-yellow pair of trousers, an immense red-and-black turban, and was furnished with a stout beard. His abba, or camel's-hair cloak, was tattered, and altogether his see did not appear a very thriving one, though this appearance of indigence might have been feigned as a defence against Mussulman extortion. He had come two years ago from the mountains of Koordistan, where he said the Nestorians were numerous, to take charge of that community in the plains. Though acquainted with the word Nestooree, it was, he said, rejected by his people, who disavowed Nestorius; and he affirmed that the word intended to be used was Nesseranee, a common expression over the East for Christians, and derived from Nazareth: Kaldanee was the name, he said, of his nation and language, the latter bearing a strong resemblance to Syriac, and much affinity with Arabic. Mar Shimoon (Great Simon), he said, was the name of his chief or Patriarch, who lived at Kojamis, near Joolamerk, in the heart of the mountains. Great Simon, according to his account, must be a very great man, for he can muster an army of fifteen thousand men, all Christians,

who belong chiefly to the mountain districts of Toqoobee and Teearee. In short, he is a downright pope. I asked the bishop if he had any objection to my attending divine service in his village—to which he replied it would be a favour to his community. I inquired, if Englishmen came among them to instruct and educate them, how they would be received. He replied, with honour and joy. He added that they did not wish for Feringhees (Frenchmen, no doubt), as they were Qatoleeqs (Catholics), yet if they did come, being strangers, and from a distant land, they would be kindly received. At parting he gave me an apostolic benediction, and wished my friends in heaven and my enemies to the devil.

September 7th, Sunday.—To-day I went to the Nestorian church. It was in a village near the town, surrounded by beautiful gardens. I found the bishop standing in the village, apparently superintending the slaughter of an ox. As he had no signs of praying about him, I asked him if I were late, and if prayers were over—to which he answered that he had deferred the service on my account. We then proceeded to the church, and, by a door three feet in height (these small dimensions being, no doubt, intended for security), we entered a dark room twenty feet square, the floor of which was covered with a few pieces of matting. There were three brick structures, which seemed to be altars, for on them books were placed, and in one corner lay a large bundle of firewood.

The service was simple enough. The bishop had a single attendant, who, I suppose, was a priest, and not at all a reputable-looking son of the church. The bishop was not decked in vestments or clerical garments of any kind; and the priest put on only a white band round his neck, with another round his waist, ornamented with a cross. On the middle altar there was a lamp burning; and during prayers a vessel containing very strong incense was occasionally swung. They applied it to the books on the altar (the Scriptures, no doubt), to a figure of the cross, the bishop's beard, the priest's face, then to mine, to the great discomfiture of my nose and eyes, and then a small dose was ad-

ministered to the rest of the congregation when it arrived. The bishop and priest sang and chanted alternately. They remained in a standing position, excepting when they read the bible, when they sat. Their mode of reading the Scripture resembled the monotonous, though far from unpleasing, recitative intonation used in reading the Koran. From the near connexion of Arabic and Kaldanee, and from the apparent metrical division of the verses, it also bore a strong similarity to the Koran. For a long time I and my two Mussulman servants formed the entire congregation. The priest appeared to get ashamed of so scanty an attendance, for a boy, peeping in at the door, was apparently sent to collect an audience, which soon after appeared, represented by half a dozen of men and a few women. The men kissed the bishop's hand, mine, and that of the priest more than once. The behaviour of the khaleefa was tolerably respectful. The priest, who was constantly yawning, seemed heartily tired of his occupation, and was continually talking in a most irreverent manner to the congregation, who imitated his example.

In the church there was not a single picture or image, and, in answer to my inquiry, they said such things were never permitted by their religion.

After the service we went to the bishop's house to eat fruit; the habitation was poor, but clean. The subject of religion being soon introduced, I took the opportunity of asking whether according to their creed Christ was God or man—to which some of the company replied, that he was a Peyghember, meaning a Prophet in Persian. The bishop got hold of the word, and talked to them in Kaldanee with much warmth. The discussion ended by their saying they could not take on themselves to declare whether he was God or man; that they did not like to assert he was God, and were equally averse to pronounce him to be only a man; farther, they affirmed that he had existed before Adam, and, like God, had always been.

This was all the information I could obtain on the mooted point, what attributes the Nestorians ascribe to the second Person of the Trinity. Some years after the above

conversation I was assured by an American missionary to the Kaldanees that their belief was in perfect accordance with that of the Churches of Rome and England; while a Lazarist missionary to the Catholic Kaldanees near Ooroomeeya affirmed, with equal positiveness, that their disbelief in Christ's Godhead was complete.

The fact seems to be that the Nestorians assign too literal an interpretation to the maxim of being all things to all men. Centuries of oppression and misgovernment have made them too eager in yielding their opinions to those persons with whom they converse, if the latter happen to be superior in station; hence the difficulty in ascertaining their real belief. Dr. Grant, of the American mission, looks on the Nestorians as nearly entitled to the dignity of being classed as "sound Protestants." Yet the following is the account of their religious condition given by the Rev. Mr. Dwight and the Rev. Mr. Smith, two American missionaries who preceded Dr. Grant and the Rev. Mr. Perkins in their researches at Ooroomeeya, and who complained of the difficulty they experienced in arriving at a conclusive opinion on this subject. They positively recognise the divinity and humanity of Christ in one Person, but the Spirit proceeds from the Father alone. There are seven sacraments, baptism, eucharist, ordination, marriage, burial, confirmation, confession; but not auricular confession, which some of them say is found in their ancient books, but is not now practised. The laity take the bread and the wine at communion; the elements cease to be bread and wine after consecration; transubstantiation takes place, and a sacrifice is offered up in the mass. They fast abundantly, and eat no animal food at such periods. They abstain from labour on festivals, and celebrate the feast of the Assumption; but they hesitate to recognise the fact. They read the Scripture a good deal; the canonical books are the same as in the Catholic church. The Church service is not understood by the people at large, being in Estrangelo, or old Syriac; but there are translations for their use. They pray to the saints, and regard them as mediators. Hell is eternal. Masses and prayers are said for the dead, but purgatory is

denied. Bishops cannot marry, or eat meat; the clergy may marry, but those who do so are not eligible as bishops. There are monasteries for monks, and convents for nuns, who take vows of celibacy, seclusion, &c. They offer sacrifice of animals to remove sickness, &c. One of the authorities of these American missionaries was a bishop of twenty. The bishops did not all agree in the exposition of their creed.

To resume my note-book. I asked if they confessed their sins to the bishop, and if he pronounced a pardon of their offences. This inquiry produced a long, loud, and hot discussion in Kaldanee. The bishop was very energetic, but could get no one to listen to him. At last it was decided that confession was not admitted in their church, and that none besides God could forgive sin. As I before observed, the Nestorians are sometimes accused of regulating their profession of faith according to the supposed opinions of the inquirers. In this instance I was, as a matter of course, regarded as a Protestant; but had my Chaldæan friends been aware of my being a Catholic, their replies might perchance have been different.

When a man intends to have a son a khaleefa, for three years before the birth of the prospective bishop his mother must abstain from flesh of every description. If instead of a son a daughter is born, the latter neither eats meat nor marries during her life. The khaleefaship seems to be confined to families. A khaleefa, for instance, dies; his brother or sister sets about producing another should the defunct bishop have no nephews.

Such was the beginning of my intercourse with the Nestorians or Chaldæans of Ooroomeeya. Neither they nor I then guessed how much more intimate our connexion was to become. When subsequently my position was altered, and that circumstances enabled me to befriend the Christians living in this secluded spot, I did not fail to aid them to the extent of my power. Their sufferings were chiefly owing to the oppressions of the Afshars, which are both incredible and indescribable. I myself saw enough to convince me that they did not repose on a bed of roses. Their

daughters are carried off and forcibly married to Mussulmans; their young sons are often compelled to embrace Mahómmedanism; and the needy Afshar nobles extort money from their helpless ryots by extraordinary modes of torture. So at least we are told; though, to say the truth, I have always thought that invention was not backward in these narrations. With the aid of my agreeable and astute colleague, Count Alexander Medem, the Russian Minister at Tehran, I succeeded in obtaining unusual privileges for this community. A Christian chief, a refugee from Georgia, and a colonel in the Persian army, was placed over them as superintendent, with a general charge of their affairs, to protect them from violence and extortion. When their brethren, subjects of the Sublime Porte in the hitherto inaccessible mountains of Tokoobee and Teearee, were suffering desolation from fire and sword at the hands of Bedr Khan Bey, the savage chief of Bohtan, the Nestorians of Ooroomeeya were enjoying unwonted security in person and property.

More than this, sympathy for this race came from no less a place than America, where one would think they had enough of their own, red and black, to educate or convert, without wandering to the sequestered valley of Ooroomeeya in quest of the sons of Shem. They have, however, done so, and have succeeded, as was to be anticipated when zeal, intelligence, and wealth were brought into action. Soon after my arrival Dr. Grant, of the New England Independent Church, made his appearance at Ooroomeeya, where he was shortly followed by the Rev. Mr. Perkins. Dr. Grant, a man of great activity and energy, was gathered to his fathers some years ago at Moosul, owing to a malady contracted in his vocation; but Mr. Perkins, who is distinguished for his scholastic acquirements, is the head of the flourishing American mission of which they then planted the germs. Gradually their compatriots, both men and women, increased in number, according as the object of their wealthy society was developed, and when a position on a strong foundation was established. They are now a colony. They were warmly received by the Nestorians,

whom they professed only to educate, and were freely allowed to pray and discourse in the churches. Two years ago they were thirty-eight Americans in number, men, women, and children, who enjoy English protection. They have their town house and their country house in the neighbouring hills, fortified sufficiently to resist a predatory incursion of Koords. The entire educational management of the Nestorian youth, of both sexes, has been in their hands during many years. As they profess not to proselytize, I designedly refrain from adding that their religious instruction is equally under the control of these reverend gentlemen, though this point was often the subject of good-humoured discussion between them and me; I maintaining, as well I might, that practically education by them was conversion. The clergy seem to be entirely in their hands, many of the most influential among the episcopacy receiving salaries as teachers. Their schools for boys and girls are numerous, and thronged with pupils, who receive not only instruction, but, I believe, a small monthly allowance, when necessary, for subsistence. That mighty regenerator, a printing press, has been established, and is in constant operation; and when I left Persia there was an electric telegraph in course of construction to communicate between the town and country establishments of the mission.

All this training must necessarily produce fruit; the presence, example, and instruction of such men cannot fail to do their work; and I doubt not that a change is taking place, which in a generation or two will produce a vast improvement in the moral and intellectual condition of the Nestorians.

Yet I cannot go the length of a foreign diplomatist of distinguished literary reputation, whom I once accidentally met in a railway carriage, and who declared, with a heat which could not brook opposition, but which enthusiasm might sanction, that the regeneration of Persia was to proceed from the American missionary establishment; but as his excellency, with equal tenacity, maintained that the present Christian movement, as he was pleased to call it, in China, was infallibly a token of Chinese regeneration, civili-

zation, progress, and what not, I felt no disposition to relinquish the plain and obvious conjecture that the civilization of Persia is, according to the ordinary course of events, to proceed from England, Russia, and Turkey. Persia has already made some advance. She is different from what she was twenty years ago; and this can be only owing to an infusion of European ideas.

This American rose-garden could not remain altogether free from thistles, and the thistle was a rival establishment. The Kaldanees, or Chaldæans, are divided into two religions, the one of the Nestorian faith, the other of the Church of Rome. The former are numerous in the valley of Oooroomeeya, amounting to perhaps 400 families; while the Catholics are few. But in the adjoining district of Salmās, between Ooroomeeya and Khooe, the Catholic Kaldanees are a considerable body. When the American establishment in Ooroomeeya became known, the Propaganda at Rome felt alarm at the danger to which its flock was exposed; and though some of the priests at Salmās had been educated at Rome, it was considered that European energy only could stem the torrent from the western hemisphere. Some French Lazarist missionaries were despatched to the rescue in the persons of Père Cluzel, Père Darnis, and one or two others. These gentlemen abounded in zeal and activity; but they were poor, and wholly unable to contend against the treasures of Boston and the paraphernalia which gave so much brilliancy to the operations emanating from Oooroomeeya. It was as much as they could do to hold their own ground, and preserve their flock from the invaders. As might be surmised, dissensions followed. There were accusations and recriminations. I advised each party to cultivate his own vineyard, to guard his own flock, to eschew contention and rivalry, of which the result might be the expulsion of both missionary establishments. This advice was adopted; and if there has been any want of that charity to which both appealed so often, there has been at least an absence of open hostility.

The French missionaries had, in fact, a narrow escape of expulsion through the hostility of the Russian Government,

which even proceeded to the length of extorting a firman from the late Shah prohibiting Christians from changing their religion. The intention was to prevent conversion among the Armenians to other creeds, Catholic, Protestant, or Nestorian. The Patriarch of the Armenians of that part of the world being a resident in Russia, the Emperor perhaps considered himself in a measure the head of that church. When Mahommed Shah died, and his Muscovite Minister Hajee Meerza Aghasee ceased to reign (for he in reality was the sovereign), the Persian Government was persuaded to revoke that obnoxious edict, and Christians are again free to choose their own faith.

Who are the Kaldanees? I have ended with the beginning. According to the opinion of that enterprising traveller and zealous missionary, my friend the late Dr. Grant, who by his researches was well qualified to form an accurate judgment on the subject, they are a remnant of Israel, a relic of the ten tribes carried into captivity by Shalmanezer, the King of Assyria. The investigations of that American gentleman were not limited to the plain of Ooroomeeya. In his double capacity of missionary and physician, he had enjoyed opportunities for inquiry among the Nestorians in Amadia, among the independent tribes of the same sect (for then at least they were independent) who dwell in the almost inaccessible fastnesses of the Koordistan mountains, at Tearee, Tokoobee, Joolamerk, &c. The conclusion he has reached has been derived from a variety of circumstances. They themselves maintain their claim to this descent. The Jews of the same districts admit the justice of this pretension. They both, Jews and Nestorians, speak nearly a similar dialect of a language derived from the ancient Syriac. Dr. Grant asserts that the Nestorians still retain much of the ceremonial of the old law. They offer the sacrifice of peace-offerings, also first-fruits; the Sunday is strictly observed; their government is a theocracy, like that of the Jews in relation to the High Priest; they detest pork as cordially as the recognised sons of Abraham; places of refuge from blood are still retained, though in the form of churches instead of cities.

Dr. Grant estimates the total of the Kaldanee nation, Catholic* and Nestorian, in Persia, Koordistan, and Turkey, at about 200,000 souls, and that those living in Koordistan are not much less than half that number. Of these, the number attached to the Church of Rome is comparatively few.

NOTE (F.). Page 256.

KHIVA.

Journey to Khiva: Moozderan — Serrekhs — Toorkoman horses — Merve — The desert — Services of crows — The oasis — Uzbek customs — Mode of extorting confession — Night visit to the Khan of Khiva — Statistics — Designs of Russia.

IN 1740 two Englishmen, named Thomson and Hogg, undertook, almost alone, a most enterprising journey from Asiatic Russia, through the deserts of the Kirgheez, to Khiva. Their adventures are shortly described in Jonas Hanway. These are probably the first Englishmen who beheld that Uzbek capital. Commerce, that unraveller of countries, led them to undertake this journey. They returned in safety. In 1819, Mouraview, now of course dubbed Karski, the hero, but not the real one, of Kars, made a journey from the Caspian to Khiva, of which he has written a description. Then followed Abbott, Shakespeare, Conolly.

The following note is taken from the journal of Mr. Thomson, secretary to Her Majesty's Legation in Persia, who went from Tehran to Khiva, thirteen years ago, under peculiar circumstances, in the company of an Uzbek Elchee to the Shah, who was returning to that country. More fortunate than poor Stoddart and Conolly in their expedition to the rival Uzbek state of Bokhara, Mr. Thomson returned in safety from his perilous undertaking. He had run the ordeal of being at Khiva during the catastrophe at Cabul,

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* Dr. Grant says the word "Kaldanee," or "Chaldæan" is usually applied to the Catholics of this tribe, while the others are called Nestorians. This is very contrary to my impression, which is, that the whole nation is called Kaldanee, and the divisions are Nestorian and Catholic.

and may be said to have had a wonderful escape. It was only his own dexterity, resolution, and knowledge of eastern character which saved him from the unhappy lot of his countrymen.

"From Meshed to Moozderan is about fifty-five miles. This is the frontier station of Persia on the road to Merve, and is occupied only by a small military guard, to watch the movements of the Toorkomans, and give speedy intelligence of their inroads from this side of the desert. It is situated at the top of the pass leading to Serrekhs, and the guards find security in round towers loopholed above, with a low entrance at the foot, which can be readily barricaded when any suspicious-looking parties are observed in the distance. At night, the guards being few, they do not in times of danger venture to remain outside the tower, and on retiring to their hold they sweep the ground across the narrow ravine, and are thus enabled at break of day to ascertain what number of people have passed, whether foot or horse, and give notice to the nearest station in what direction the plunderers have gone. From Moozderan to Serrekhs, about fifty miles, is desert and destitute of water. It is situated on the river Tejjen, which at this point contains a considerable volume of water, but after flowing some distance to the north is absorbed by the sand of the desert. Serrekhs was formerly a thriving town, celebrated for the excellence of its carpets, but having been attacked in 1832, and plundered, by Abbas Meerza, grandfather to the present Shah, it has since remained in a state of ruin. A large number of Toorkomans, of the Tekkeh tribe, occupy the lands in its vicinity and the banks of the river, and cultivate them to the extent required for their own wants. This tribe possesses the best breed of what are called Toorkoman horses. It is a cross between the Arab and native horse, in which a good deal of the symmetry of the former is preserved, and in height, power, and figure resembles the best breed of carriage horses in England. They are much esteemed by the Persians, and good specimens find a ready market in Tehran, at prices varying from 50*l.* to 75*l.* The road as far as the Tejjen is

firm, and adapted for the employment of wheeled carriages, but beyond it to Merve, a distance of about 110 miles, a considerable portion of the way being koom, sandy desert, guns, although of small calibre, are with difficulty dragged across it. Water too is nowhere found between the rivers Tejjen and Murghaub, unless in one or two cisterns and wells. In spring the former is drinkable, but later in the season the traveller who cannot afford to transport it on camels, in skins, must content himself with the fetid and brackish produce of the wells which are found at about ten or twelve miles distance from each other. In spring the distance between these two rivers, and between the Murghaub and the Oxus, can, by eating sparingly, be passed without suffering much from thirst; but after the heats have commenced, fluid of some sort, however offensive it may be to the palate and smell, must be largely drunk to supply the constant drain from the system which a temperature of from 115° to 120° in the shade creates; and when this has been continued for a week or ten days consecutively, the degree of thirst to which the wayfarer is exposed may be readily understood when it is remembered that during that period he has been forced, to obtain momentary relief, to swallow draughts of saline liquid which only add force to the insatiable craving which devours him."

"Four towns of the name of Merve have existed at different epochs; that of the present day hardly deserves the name, it being only an assemblage of wretched huts commanded by a small mud fort, in which a governor on the part of the Khan of Khiva resides, and defended by a few patereros and swivel matchlocks. It is the resting-place for a few days of all caravans passing between Persia and Bokhara, and has nothing to boast of beyond affording accommodation for travellers, and a small bazaar to supply the wants of the Saruk and Salar tribes of Toorkomans encamped in its neighbourhood. But the soil for some distance around is highly fertile; and as the Murghaub affords an abundant supply of water for irrigation, grain, fruits, and all the necessaries of life might be raised to supply the wants of a very populous city. Near this still stands

the roofless town of Merve e Kajjar. The streets, walls of the houses, mosques, and baths, still remain as when it was inhabited, but silent as the desert, for not a human being is to be found within its walls. This town was built by the portion of the present royal tribe of Persia, when it was transplanted from Georgia by Shah Abbas the Great; but the town having been captured about seventy years ago by Shah Murad Bey, the Uzbek chief of Bokhara, it has remained unpeopled since that date. At some little distance the site of the Merve of the days of the Seljukian dynasty is marked by a number of low hillocks and a single tomb. This the tradition of the place assigns as the resting-place of the magnificent Alp Arselan, the second of his line. Here the wandering Toorkoman and the followers of the Soonnee faith still in passing alight from their horses, and repeat a prayer for the repose of the soul of the only known tenant of the once populous city. Of the Merve of remote antiquity no traces meet the eye, and its site is no longer known by the rude and ignorant tribes which now wander around the proud capital of former days. Among so barbarous a race it is gratifying to find that there is one individual in whom interest can be felt—this is a Toorkoman Moolla, who is known by the title of the Caliph. He is a man of a mild disposition, respected by the chiefs of the neighbouring principalities; and although active in repressing to the best of his ability the system of kidnapping and traffic in slaves, practised by the people of his tribe, has maintained a degree of influence over them amounting to veneration. On paying him a visit I was much pleased with the gentleness and courtesy of his manners, but somewhat puzzled what to do when presented, after tea had been served, with some of the leaves from the teapot, and a lump of sugar of about a pound in weight, until I saw what the other guests did with their smaller portions, and following their example munched up the leaves, and stuffed the sugar into the breast of my coat for home consumption.

"Shortly after leaving Merve the traveller again enters the sandy desert, and through it continues his way until he reaches the Oxus, at a place called Kabaklee (the pumpkin-

ground), a distance of about 170 miles. In spring, after the winter snows have disappeared, and the soil has been moistened by the vernal rains, the surface is everywhere covered with a bright coat of verdure, scanty indeed when looked at near, but when viewed in the distance giving the appearance of a rich sward in all directions until lost in the horizon. At this season the immensity of the space, the freshness of the air, the richness of the green tint under foot, and the clearness of the sky above, exhilarate the body and give an elasticity to the spirits similar to what is experienced at sea when, under easy sail, and on a smooth sea, the ship, a solitary speck on the watery desert, is gaily advancing on its way to the promised port, and enables one to understand the feeling of attachment which binds the nomade to the place of his nativity. Some portions of the desert are, however, covered with the shrubby tree called Fak. It grows to the height of fifteen or twenty feet, and some of them are, near the ground, of considerable thickness. But the wood is so dry and brittle that it is an easy matter to snap even the trunk asunder; and as it has so little of the sap of vitality, when thrown on the fire it ignites at once with a clear but short-lived flame, and burns with little or no smoke. The dingy colour of the trees, their stunted and aged form, and the silence which reigns among them, give those wooded tracts such an air of desolation and sadness, that the traveller gladly exchanges the shelter and warmth they have afforded for the cold night breeze on the open steppe. In summer the wind almost always blows from the north; and as then every blade of grass has been burned up, the light sand is drifted along and deposited in waves, whose slope is abrupt towards the north, and falls gradually on the other side.

"The chief wells on this line of road are those of Kishman, Yak Keper, Yandaklee, and Sartlanlee. At one of these I found the body of a derveesh, who, unable to proceed with the caravan, had, in that place of solitude, lain down and died. No charitable hand had been there to lay him in his place of rest. The wind alone had done the last rites by depositing a small tumulus of sand over the corpse, except

on the sheltered side, from which an elbow protruded. Wretched and dreary must have been the last hours of this lonely and abandoned being, were it not that alongside of his little scrip, containing some stale bread and parched peas, and within reach of his hand, were a small pouch of medicated tobacco and an unfinished pipe; and with the aid of this drug his last breath probably passed away in some fancied vision of terrestrial or celestial bliss. Quintus Curtius, if I remember rightly, has been called to task by the translator of Arrian, for having stated that Alexander, on his way to the temple of Jupiter Ammon, had been guided through the desert to the spot of the oasis by crows; but however much that author may have exaggerated, in this he was probably correct, for I have myself been frequently escorted in a similar manner by these birds from one well to another. They fly a short distance ahead and await the approach of the caravan, and so on until the station has been reached, where the stray grains from the horses' nosebags, or, as is frequently the case, the carcase of an overspent animal, is the reward of their unconscious services. About thirty-six miles before reaching the Oxus a low range of hills of pure sand rises above the level steppe; and in gratitude for the blessing of pure, sweet water it dispenses, has received the name of Takht e Suleiman (Solomon's throne). "Water is only found, as on the steppe, at the depth of many fathoms beneath the surface, and both saline and fetid, while here, at a high elevation, and by merely scooping the sand for a few feet with the hand, sweet water oozes out and fills the cavity. This circumstance is considered by the Uzbeks as a miracle, and attributed by them to the son of David; but the more natural explanation would be, that a considerable fissure from the bed of the Oxus, which, from a point at a greater elevation, finds its exit here, and in the lapse of ages having discharged its stream of water impregnated with fine sand, has given rise to the monticule as it now appears, and whose dimensions will probably still increase."

"At Deveh Boyoon the cultivation begins, and the road, leaving the river, branches off to the left to the town of

Hezar Asp; but it is only on reaching this latter place that the highly cultivated lands of the Khivan oasis are fairly seen. From this place to Khiva, about forty-two miles, the whole country is covered with smiling fields, unwalled villages, and, as in Europe, houses and gardens in the open fields; a proof of the feeling of security from oppression rarely met with in more civilized Persia. The alluvial tract is of little breadth, but is intersected in all directions by canals for irrigation. Every spot which has been reclaimed or preserved from the encroachment of the surrounding desert is carefully brought into cultivation. The importance attached to husbandry in this country is marked by the national ceremonies in opening the great canals for irrigation, which are annually performed in the spring by the ruler of Khiva in person."

"The ground being everywhere level, single-horse carts of rude construction, the wheels without any girding of iron, are employed by the peasantry for the transport of their farm produce, instead of, as in Persia, being carried on the backs of donkeys, horses, and mules. Against the rearing of the latter there is a religious prejudice."

"When a deputation of the elders of the villages meets a foreigner to compliment him on his arrival, bread is always presented to him; and if he should alight, and the means of the chief person will admit of it, sugar is also offered, and the piece which forms the head of the cone would appear to be the choicest bit, and is given to the principal guest. When it has been all distributed, the lumps are deposited in each man's garment and carried off by him.

"The features of the real Uzbek (query the Uzri of the ancients?) are good, and many of their complexions are fair. This is more particularly observable in the women and young girls, and many of the latter bear a strong resemblance to the young females of German blood. The system of close veiling which prevails in Persia among the women of the towns and villages is not followed in Khiva. They wear an outer drapery which covers the body from head to foot, but the face is, in general, left exposed; and in the country, women and girls, single or in company, are

often met walking from village to village, apparently as secure from insult as they are in European countries. The number of Persian slaves imported and also bred in the country is immense, and in almost every house where servants are kept, one or more, according to the means of the proprietor, are to be found. The Uzbek husbands, with the grown-up males of the family, pass their nights by themselves in the outer apartments, it being considered derogatory to the dignity of the husband that his room should be shared by his wife."

"A few days after my arrival three men were seized by order of the Khan on a charge of criminal assault on a woman. A pit of greater depth than the height of the tallest of them was dug, into which they were put after they had previously denied their guilt, and their feet firmly attached to the bottom of it. A thin stream of water was then made to flow into the pit, and, as the water gradually rose, they were called upon to make a confession of their crime. This they all persisted in refusing to do, until the shortest of the party was on the point of being suffocated by the water, which had reached his mouth. He in his last struggles admitted that they were all three guilty; and upon this, although the two others stoutly denied their complicity, they were immediately taken out and executed.

"The Khan of Khiva's practice is to transact his most important business in the night. Notice had been given to me that on an early day he would see me. Two or three nights after the intimation had been given, when the doors had been locked, my servants asleep and myself in bed reading, a loud knocking was heard at the outer gate. This was a message from the Khan that he would receive me then. My meerza and servants, who could not understand a night summons of this nature, looked as if they had heard a sentence of execution. The meerza, with tears running over his beard, begged me not to go; but was somewhat relieved when I told him that it was a practice of the country, and still more when I told him that it was not my intention to take him with me. By the light of a couple of lanterns we proceeded to the town and entered the Khan's palace,

without having met any people on the way. I was first conducted to the room of the Mehter Agha, the Chief Vezeer, which was nearly full of his people and meerzas. Finding that he was sitting near the door, and wishing to be polite, I was seating myself between him and the door, and was surprised that he should motion to me to take, what I believed to be, the higher place, but in reality the lower. Being at that time ignorant that the place of dignity was the reverse of that established in Persia, I dropped myself on the ground and maintained the place I had selected, in spite of what I conceived to be their good-natured endeavours to do me honour. After tea kalleons were brought. With the exception of the principal Vezeer and another, the latter were smoked as in Persia; but those two persons inhaled the smoke not directly from the pipe, but from the mouth and lungs of the pipe-bearer, who, after filling his lungs with as much of the smoke as they could bear, approached his mouth to that of his master, and, by an ex and inhalation between the parties, the transfer was effected. This unsightly practice has its origin in the quality of the tobacco grown in the country, which is so pungent when compared with that of Sheeraz, that only the strongest lungs can bear it when taken direct from the pipe; but by the employment of an intermediary, the more stimulating portions of the smoke are deposited in the servant's mouth and throat. After this ceremony had been gone through, a young lad of the class called mehrems announced that the Khan Hazret was ready to receive me. I thought that some one or more of the officials in the room would have accompanied me; but I was told no one could go unless specially summoned by the prince, and that, as I alone had been sent for, I must go unaccompanied by any one but the mehrem. From the Vezeer's room we crossed a middle-sized court, lighted by a single lantern at the entrance, and opposite it came to a doorway and long passage absolutely in utter darkness. The appearance of the place, the hour of night, and the solitude, were trying to the nerves, so I desired the lad to go and bring a lantern. He said he dared not do so, but told me, if I was afraid to go on in the dark, to give him

my hand, and he would guide me. But this I declined, and, somewhat satisfied by his artless manner, told him to lead on; and cautiously groping along, with one hand on the wall and one foot well stretched out in front to guard against a pit in the way, I at length came to another court, but altogether without light, in the centre of which a round Toorkoman or Alachick tent was pitched. To this tent the lad pointed by way of announcing that there was the abode of Uzbek dignity. I told him quietly to go and announce me; but putting his finger to his lips, he cut all discussion short by darting into the passage we had just come through, leaving me to find out some mode of presentation for myself. My first idea was, Is it possible that I have been entrapped into the haram of the Khan? and the first impulse was to follow the lad and endeavour to return to the Vezeer's room; but after a little reflection I fell on the ordinary expedient of announcing my presence by a cough. A faint echo, however, was all it called forth, and so after a considerable pause I had recourse to my pocket-handkerchief, and trumpeted it like a young elephant, with the same result as before. I again eyed the dark passage and the tent alternately, but at length made for the latter with as heavy and deliberate steps as possible. On lifting the corner of the carpet which formed the door of the tent, I perceived, though indistinctly, a person seated on the ground, who motioned to me to come in and be seated on a small piece of carpet close to the door, and right in front of him. This was Allah Koolee Khan, Khan Hazret, king of Kharezm, and the shadow of God. He was seated cross-legged on a small velvet carpet spread on the floor, and partly reclining on a feather cushion at his left side. Before him was another small carpet, on which were arranged a small battle-axe, a mace, a broad-bladed dagger, a double barrelled pistol, and some other things which I had not time to note what they were. There was a single light in the tent, with a reflector in front, evidently so intentionally arranged as to throw the light on the spot where I was seated, and to keep himself in the shadow. After I was seated, he asked me, in Uzbek Turk-

ish, what had brought me to his country. I replied in Persian, that I, being ignorant of Turkish, would, if he allowed me, call a person attached to me to act as interpreter, which proposition was answered by a voice from a corner, telling me to say what I had to communicate in Persian. On looking in the direction of the sound I perceived in the dingy light a person standing in a hole about the depth of his knees, and in length and breadth like a place which might be used as a slipper-bath. I therefore spoke in Persian, and my words were interpreted into Turkish by the Uzbek C. B. Before, however, my discourse was completed, the Khan suddenly seized the cushion on which he had been leaning, and, dashing it on the ground at his side, demanded of me in a violent tone, and at the same time seizing and cocking the pistol which was lying before him, if I had come there to frighten him. The words and the movement were so rapid and unexpected that it required a minute or two before I could frame a reply: during the interim I had not moved in the least from the position in which I was seated; and my reply, to the effect that his interpreter must, either from ignorance or intentionally, have misinterpreted what I had said, in which there was no ground for offence, was delivered with coolness; and I further requested again to be allowed to retire and return with my own interpreter. He said, in very good Persian, that it was unnecessary, as he himself understood what I said, and, smiling to the interpreter, remarked that the English were a very honest and straightforward race, bold, and wise, and many other things complimentary, and, adding that he would give me an audience on another occasion, changed the conversation to the state of Europe, and made some very anxious inquiries as to the mode practised in Europe for blanching the wax employed in candle-making. On taking leave, I was left to find my own way out as I had found it in; and on issuing from the tent, what with the pistol-scene and my attention being intensely concentrated for an hour and a half, I was thoroughly perplexed to find out by which of the four corners of the court I had entered. More by good luck than

good guiding I was happy to find, on reaching the end of the passage I had selected, that it was the right one, and the lad who had guided me waiting my return. My tribulations caused by the general report of its being the intention of the Khan Hazret to have us massacred on the way to Merve, and the proposition of the agent sent by the Khan to Afghanistan to ascertain the real posture of our affairs there, to have me seized by Neeaz Mahommed Baee, the governor of Merve, and delivered over to the Cabul chiefs, I need not detail, as the one was unfounded, and the other did not succeed."

"According to the Defterdar (accountant-general) the following is a summary of the statistics of Khiva:—It contains 30,000 horsemen, 17 guns, 1 mortar, 17 kherwars of gunpowder (a kherwar is about 7 cwt.), 1000 cannon-balls in stone. There are 100,000 families, from whom the revenue is raised. The property of the Khan consists of 100 pairs of oxen, 6000 kherwars of wheat and barley in store; 2000 pairs of oxen are furnished by the Khan to the Ryots, from whom he in return receives 5000 kherwars of grain; 20,000 kherwars of rice; 100 cart-horses, 50 camels, 5 mules, 24 milch cows, 1000 riding horses; 3000 stand of arms, chiefly muskets; jewellery and female finery estimated at 40,000 tilleh (a tilleh is 11*s.*); 100 regular soldiers, and 1 Russian artilleryman. The walled towns west of the Oxus are Pitnek, Hezar Asp, Khiva, Dash Howz, Shabat, Henegah, Poorshowla, Khorcheet, Koukaad, Kokneh, Oorgenje, Felan Loo, Mangut Tāzeh, Oorgenje. The Khan possesses 500 men slaves in his own immediate possession, and 4000 in the employment of Ryots on the state lands."

Here finishes the amusing narrative of Mr. Thomson.

For more than a century Russia has been aiming at the possession of Khiva. Twice she has failed in attaining her object by force, by open force. The next attempt will probably secure the prize. Dissension at Khiva, steamers on the Aral and at the mouth of the Oxus, a fortress at the Jaxartes, invite an attempt and promise success.

England has some concern with the establishment of Russia in this principality. There she would be inexpugn-

able. She is within two hundred miles of the Caspian, a space which, to minds accustomed to the vast distances of Asia, is as nothing. A Persian soldier thinks little of a march of one thousand miles from Azerbijan to Khorassan. Master of Khiva, the Russian government becomes supreme over the Toorkomans, and will find no insurmountable difficulty in establishing through the intervening level tract a permanent and available communication with the Caspian sea. The noble river Oxus, navigable to within a hundred miles of Hindoo Koosh, becomes Russian, and is covered with Russian steamers. At his choice the Emperor can fix the boundary of his empire on that river, for who is there to gainsay him? Khoolloom and Koondooz will doubtless then become the limits of the Russian dominions. The trade between India and those countries, now free and uncontrolled on the payment of not immoderate duties, falls then under the despotic rule of that government, and becomes subject to its protective and selfish commercial restrictions. Her near neighbourhood is not likely to strengthen our position in north-western India. And yet it seems impossible to avert these evils, or to prevent the downfall of Khiva, or its eventual occupation by Russia. Can nothing however be done to save the Oxus, to save at least the portion approximating to Afghanistan?

NOTE (G). Page 258.

AFGHANISTAN.

Our conquest and defeat — Practicability of invasion of India — Necessary precautions — Importance of Candahar as a military position — Russian preparations for another war.

AFGHANISTAN cost the British nation—or what is, or ought to be, the same thing, the government of India—sixteen millions sterling. With a handful of men we achieved a great conquest. We met with a reverse, a single reverse, for the repulse of small detachments is of no consideration, and we fled. If our discomfiture had been caused by the

power, the bravery, or the intelligence of our opponents, flight would have admitted of apology. But it was not so. The defeat we suffered arose solely from our ignorance and unparalleled disregard of every military rule and precaution. We acted at Cabul in our military arrangements in a manner that would be blameable and unsafe at Delhi; and this defeat sufficed to drive us in a panic from the really important part of our conquest and scene of unvarying success—Candahar.

Which portion of our conduct is deserving of blame—the undertaking of this costly expedition, or the abandonment of a splendid conquest? The answer to this question seems to rest on one point. Is the invasion of India practicable by Russia? or, what is of equal importance, is she able to make a dangerous demonstration in Afghanistan? If it be certain that this proposition admits of a distinct denial, then it must be conceded the expedition was needless; but if it be probable that a demonstration of the nature alluded to be practicable, then it appears to be almost equally incontestable that the relinquishment of Candahar, above all, was an error.

Without undertaking to decide the large question at issue, I shall assume the feasibility of invasion to be established, and merely observe that now more than ever should we be on the watch, for the Russian and Indian dominions are twelve hundred miles nearer to each other than when the invasion of Afghanistan took place. Excluded from prosecuting her ambitious objects in other quarters, revenge, the desire of retrieving her prestige, all conspire to urge Russia to the East. She will await the favourable moment in patience, moving forward in the mean while by the wiles she is reputed to understand so well. On this occasion she has been opposed by four combatants; next time these conditions may be reversed. Let it not be forgotten that, when her railroads to Odessa and to Vladikafkaz are completed, her strength, particularly towards the East, will be doubled.

What course ought we to pursue? Shall we imitate the past, and cast foresight aside; or shall we take time by the

forelock? Shall we meet the invader in Afghanistan, or shall we allow him to occupy that ground, and decide the contest in India itself?

As matters now stand, established as we are in the Punjab and in Peshawer, the want of a position at Cabul can hardly be viewed as a detriment. In spite of the advantages of Khiva and the Oxus, supposing both to be in the possession of Russia, the defiles and passes of the Hindoo Koosh, held, as they doubtless would be, by soldiers like those of England, would be too formidable and too doubtful an experiment to venture on. The real invasion, if it ever takes place, must be by Herat, although, no doubt, a diversion would be made by Khiva and the Hindoo Koosh. In the improbable case of an English army being driven from those formidable positions, the assailant has only done half his work. We know by woeful experience the difficulties he has to surmount before reaching the Indus. The whole route, from the Oxus to the latter stream, is so full of obstacles, there can be no hesitation in coming to the conclusion that no large army will select this road. Burns uses the following words:—"The natural strength of Cabul is its best barrier against a successful invasion." Sir W. Nott's opinion is, that "Afghanistan firmly held and well managed by us would be very valuable as a barrier."

Add to the foregoing considerations, that, if a considerable force were to sustain detention in that country, as would certainly happen, it would incur serious risk of perishing through starvation. Cabul is a country productive in fruit, but not in corn. Burns says of it, that "grain grows scantily," and that "fruit is more plentiful than bread."

If these premises be correct, it must then, as before said, be through Herat and Candahar that an invasion is to be conducted. Candahar is therefore the grand strategical point; for if Herat be the key of Afghanistan, Candahar is the key of India. The former fortress is so distant from the British frontier, that we may dismiss any consideration of its occupation by an English force at the present day.

Jonas Hanway says, "the situation of Candahar renders it a strong barrier between the empires of Persia and India."

The town of Candahar commands the three roads to India: that by Cabul, by Shikarpoor, and the sterile routes across the Suleina range to Dera Ismaël Khan and Dera Ghazee Khan, on the Indus.*

The above city is situated in the most fertile part of Afghanistan, in plains abounding with wheat, barley, and other grains. Here it is practicable to provide for the subsistance of an army during a certain time. It should be our care to secure these resources from being available to an enemy.

Candahar is surrounded by the Dooranee tribes, who, if left to themselves, are more likely to join an invader than to oppose him; but who, by being placed within the reach of control, may be converted into useful auxiliaries, or at all events rendered less hurtful.

The distance between Candahar and our outposts does not exceed 200 miles.† If the abandonment of this position is deserving of regret, its resumption should form an object of early effort. Established here, we may almost set invasion at defiance. A Gumri, a Sebastopol, in this spot makes us paramount, for it will be an announcement to all the world that the determination to remain is irrevocable.

We shall suppose ourselves established at Candahar in a large and exceedingly strong fortress, whose reduction would require a siege of several months at the least; and then consider the position of an invading army. Under the most favourable circumstances its subsistence would demand care and preparation. With Candahar in our possession it may be conceived how the difficulty would be augmented. The land, if necessary, could be laid waste in a greater or less degree, the grain removed, the flocks and herds driven off (our irregular cavalry is at least a match

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* There is a mountain road from Herat to Cabul, but it is described to be impassable for guns, and to be through a thinly inhabited country, consequently to be deficient in food.

† It is assumed that Dader and Kelat are our frontier stations.

for Cossacks); a desert might enclose Candahar to any distance. We may conceive by what happened to our own forces at Sebastopol, with an open sea in their rear, what would be the condition of an army undertaking a long siege in the midst of Afghanistan, in the face of all these obstacles. Shall we be told that the enemy would despise this formidable fortress and large garrison, and advance to the Indus, leaving it in the rear? If the invaders bring with them a Napoleon or a Hannibal they may dare such an exploit; but should they suffer a defeat, what becomes of their army?

Hanway says that in 1711 the Afghans destroyed a large Persian army besieging Candahar, by laying waste the country.

Or shall we await the enemy in India? There we cannot lay waste the country, remove the grain, or drive away the flocks and herds. The density of population prohibits such an idea. In any case, and above all, let not the contest be waged on Indian land.

Or shall it be said that we can always anticipate an enemy advancing into Afghanistan, and may therefore defer that movement until the moment of danger? We may do so no doubt, but will it be contended that we and the invaders shall then be in the same relative position as before supposed?

If invasion be practicable, the best mode of preventing it is by preparation, and by surrounding it by such difficulties as will make the undertaking an act of desperation. It is conceived that the mode indicated is one of the means of accomplishing this important object. Our taking up a formidable position at Candahar will go far to deter even speculation on the chances of invasion.

The cost of the plan offered for consideration, and the drain on the already encumbered resources of India, deserve reflection. Yet present expenditure is often real economy, of which the war we are now waging is a notable example. It seems to be a national vice to prefer the most lavish outlay in prospect to present moderate disbursement. Whatever tends to avert an attempt to wrest India from

our hands, and prevent the enormous consequent expenditure, is economy.

Should the day ever come for the realisation of these speculations, it is to be hoped we shall not renew our lavish expenditure of gold in vain endeavours to allay discontent. Bribery has the contrary effect. It stimulates instead of soothing, for all cannot be bribed. Let us rule with all the honesty and justice that despotism admits of, pardoning anything excepting insurrection, and making no unsparing use of disarmament and expatriation.

Other considerations might be urged in favour of the views here advocated; but it is not expedient to allude more particularly to them here; and they are, moreover, not hidden under an impenetrable veil to any one who chooses to reflect on the subject.

Russia may be said to have already announced that she is even now preparing for her next encounter with Great Britain. Her railways have no other end than to transport troops. She found that in the last struggle her weakness lay in the impossibility of collecting her forces at the proper moment on the distant points of her empire. This weakness she has intimated shall disappear. But we too will not remain idle. Our railways in India will advance as well as those of Russia. Established and prepared in Candahar, with a railway running the whole length of the left bank of the Indus, we may await any attempt in calmness. The Russian grenadier now knows his inferiority to the English soldier. The Cossack will find a match in the Hindoostanee horseman.

NOTE (H). Page 270.

SILK MANUFACTURE OF PERSIA.

Importance to Persia of her silk manufacture — Silk-trade of Geelan— Importations from England — Province of Geelan — Gipsies.

SILK is the great staple of Persian commerce, particularly of foreign traffic, which enables it to pay for a portion of its importations from abroad. For though horses, dry fruit,

and drugs are sent to India; sheep, silk, cotton, and woollen manufactures to Constantinople and other parts of Turkey; and grain, silk, and cotton goods to Russia, the amount is too insignificant to admit of payment for her extensive importations excepting by means of the precious metals. Fortunately a large proportion of her silk is consumed in Russia, who, possessing few manufactures or other productions necessary to Persia, is compelled to pay chiefly in gold for her importations thence. Were it not for this circumstance, it seems inconceivable how the commerce of Persia could be maintained, or how she could be saved from a dearth of metallic currency. Even with this aid from Russia it is supposed that gold is yearly diminishing, and that the time must come when the commerce of Persia with Europe will nearly cease. It might be conjectured that this circumstance would have already led to its gradual decrease. But this does not seem to have happened. The consumption in quantity of European manufactures has even of late somewhat augmented, remuneration being obtained by the importer by a great deterioration in quality. This change produced an amusing example of Persian ideas on free trade. A few years ago, when the chintz brought from England was absolutely worthless both in texture and colours, the Persian merchants of Tabreez sent a petition to the Shah that he should remonstrate with the British Government, in order that the manufacturers and merchants of England should be prohibited from supplying the market with such miserable goods.

The silk of Geelan is of inferior quality, and is therefore little adapted to the markets of France, England, or Italy. Attempts to produce an improvement have been made by English merchants, though with little success. Suspicion of the intention in offering advice, apathy, and an aversion to deviate from routine, are the chief obstacles to amendment. It is in the winding chiefly that change is required; the skein is too long, and the thread is uneven and knotty. This supineness is deeply to be regretted, for if Persia could supply good silk the profit to her and to England

would be great. We would take any supply she could produce, and in return she would consume a much larger quantity of our chintzes and woollen manufactures. Thus the unceasing drain of gold from Persia would find a remedy.

Still it is believed that the silk-trade of Geelan is improving, though stationary as far as England is concerned. The cultivation of the mulberry is becoming more extended, and encroachment is annually made on the thick forest for the purpose of planting that tree. Twelve years ago the quantity produced was more than a million of pounds in weight, the value of which, on the spot, was more than 450,000*l*. The duty paid to Government was above 10,000*l*., being at the rate of 5 per cent. by foreigners, and 2½ by Persians. To the above quantity of reeled silk is to be added a certain portion carried out of the province without payment of duty. Further is to be added a considerable share of waste silk, estimated to be not far short of the quantity of wound silk, though of course greatly inferior in value. The total value of the silk produced in the province ascends, therefore, to a sum not much less than 600,000*l*. This is a considerable amount for one of the smallest provinces of Persia, of which a large portion of the surface is rice-marsh, swamp, forest, and mountain, on which the mulberry-tree is not cultivated.

The value of the province of Geelan is further enhanced by its fisheries of sturgeon, salmon, and other fish, from which, however, the Government does not derive an advantage at all equivalent to their value. As before said, the sturgeon-fisheries are in the hands of Russians, who export the sturgeon to their own country.

That this province should have been long coveted by Russia is not surprising. Everything contributes to make it a desirable possession: its situation relative to Russia, its wealth and improvable qualities, its defensible position, mountains on one side, the sea on the other, swamps and jungles all over the province. Its importance to Persia is equally obvious, yet no precautions are taken for its preservation or improvement. Everything is left to chance,

and to that sovereign Persian remedy for all evils, past, present, and to come, Inshallah.

In Mazenderan and almost every part of Persia, silk is produced, though not in quantities at all approaching to its cultivation in Geelan. The Persians have acquired great dexterity in its manufacture. Almost all the various kinds found in Europe are prepared in Persia, but of much inferior gloss and finish, such as satins, sarcenet, brocades, velvets, plain and every kind of striped silk, and all exceedingly strong and durable, with brilliant colours. They display equal ability in the combination of silk and cotton. A garment composed purely of silk is "unlawful" in the Mussulman creed, a dogma rarely attended to by women, especially under the temptation of the silks of France and England; * the men are more devout. On this account a large quantity of silk and cotton stuffs is manufactured; and for the same reason the Irish manufacture of silk and wool, called tabinet, or poplin, is in high estimation.

It was at one time imagined that Persia took from England, by the way of Trebizond alone, manufactured goods to the value of a million sterling. Longer experience has rectified this estimate, and reduced it to something exceeding half this sum. In the present state of Persia it is inconceivable by what means she could pay for this large quantity of merchandize. The want of river for transport, and of roads for wheeled vehicles, and the consequent cost of conveying goods from a long distance, exclude the possibility of reimbursement by means of her productions in their present state. The only explanation is to be found in the supposition that a share of these English importations finds its way to Russia, and that payment is made in gold.

Geelan resembles Bengal in its damp climate, its swamps, and jungles. Like Bengal, too, the food of the inhabitants is principally rice, besides fish, with which the sea, lakes,

* The above term implies, that in reciting the prescribed number of prayers, if the dress is composed of unmixed silk the value of the prayers is annulled.

and rivers swarm. Bread is procurable only in towns. The woods abound in game, particularly pheasants and woodcocks. Like the Bengalees, too, and owing probably to the same cause, an unwholesome climate, the inhabitants of Geelan are indolent in mind and feeble in body. On this account several thousands of labourers from the other parts of Persia proceed thither annually, but who, on the approach of the deadly heats of summer, retire from the province. There may be said to be only one city in Geelan, that of Resht. It is altogether unlike a Persian town, being neat and clean, and, instead of dingy walls of unbaked brick, the houses are constructed of kiln-baked red bricks, with wide projecting roofs covered with tiles. The city of Resht is some miles from the sea, and is well protected by jungles and by the most abominable roads conceivable. The Government studiously avoids any improvement of the roads of the province, wisely considering that, coupled with its swamps and jungles, their present state is one of its best defences. Though inferior in military qualities to the inhabitants of Mazenderan, the natives of Geelan form good irregular troops in their own jungles.

Gipsies are found in all parts of Persia, but in Geelan they are more numerous than elsewhere. They preserve the characteristics of their race throughout the world. Fortune-telling is the occupation of the women. They live in little camps, formed of miserable tents, in which they migrate from the hot to the cold country, according to the season. The donkey is their companion, as in England, and his master is the professional mender of pots and kettles. In features and habits they differ but little from their brethren in the West, and, like them, they have preserved in their language the traces of their Hindoostanee origin. In Persian they are called Kaoolee, which word is supposed to denote a connection with an origin from Cabul.

Note on the Persian Army.

Origin of the Persian regular army — English influence — Attempted reform — Character of the soldier — The officers — The artillery — The infantry — The cavalry.

It is to the military genius of the French that we are indebted for the formation of the Indian army. Our warlike neighbours were the first to introduce into India the system of drilling native troops and converting them into a regularly disciplined force. Their example was copied by us, and the result is what we now behold.

The French carried to Persia the same military and administrative faculties, and established the origin of the present Persian regular army, as it is styled. When Napoleon the Great resolved to take Persia under his auspices, he despatched several officers of superior intelligence to that country with the mission of General Gardanne in 1808. These gentlemen commenced their operations in the provinces of Azerbijan and Kermanshah, and it is said with considerable success. English influence becoming supreme, and the French Mission having quitted Persia, it was determined to accede to the wishes of the Persian Government and continue the same military organization. Sir John Malcolm was accompanied in 1808 by two officers of the Indian army, Major Christie and Lieutenant Lindsay, to whom was confided this duty: they did it well. Major Christie was a man of considerable military endowments; he undertook the charge of the infantry, and was killed at his post at the battle of Aslandooz in 1812. His able successor was Major Hart, of the Royal Army. Under the auspices and indefatigable cooperation of Abbas Meerza, heir apparent to the throne of Persia, by whom absolute authority was confided to him, he brought the infantry of Azerbijan to a wonderful state of perfection. The artillery was placed under Lieutenant Lindsay, afterwards Major-General Sir H. Lindsay.* This officer acquired extraor-

* After having attained the rank of Major-General, and the dignity of Baronet for his services in Persia, Sir Henry Bethune returned to that

dinary influence in the army, and in particular among the artillery. He brought this branch of the forces in Azerbijan to such a pitch of real working perfection, and introduced so complete a system of esprit de corps, that to this day his name is venerated, and traces of his instruction still survive in the artillery of that province, which even now preserves some degree of efficiency.

After the last Russian war an attempt was made to reform the Persian army and revive its discipline. A detachment of officers and serjeants was sent for this purpose from the Indian army, besides an officer of the Rifle Brigade with some serjeants from home. The attempt did not succeed. After aiding in placing Mahommed Shah on the throne, distrust towards these officers took the place of former confidence. Then came the jealousies between England and Persia relative to Afghanistan, next the rupture of relations and the removal of the detachment from Persia, whither it has never returned. The successors to these English officers were a body of French military men, whose efforts were a complete failure, though it cannot be affirmed that the fault is attributable to them. At present the instruction of the Persian army is in the hands of a party of Italian officers, refugees from Naples and Venice, and of a few Hungarian and German officers, lent by Austria to the Shah. These gentlemen certainly render service within their sphere and to the extent of their influence, both of which are restrained to narrow bounds.

Mr. Morier, after an eulogy on the qualities of Persian soldiers of the regular army in various points, finishes by saying "they are greatly deficient in the soldier's first art, the art of dying." In this sarcasm Mr. Morier seems to me to have done great injustice to the profession of arms in Persia. No irregular troops, whether they be native Per-

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country for the third time a few years ago.* More than forty years had passed since he first went to Persia. The Persian Government would gladly have accepted of his service, and probably would have placed him at the head of the army, but he died in Tehran a few months after his arrival. The Persian Government showed every possible respect to his memory.

sians, or Koords, Arabs, Afghans, Toorkomans, or Turks, are able to contend with the disciplined Persian forces.* The Nizam of Persia and Turkey have never yet met; but in the last contest between these two nations, three or four thousand Persians of the regular army put to flight thirty or forty thousand Turks at Toprak Kalla, between Bayazeed and Erzeroom.

The Persian soldier is active, energetic, and robust, with immense power of enduring fatigue, privation, and exposure. He is full of intelligence, and seems to have a natural aptitude for a military life. Half clothed, half fed, and not even half paid, he will make marches of twenty-four miles day after day, and when need be he will extend them to forty miles. He bears cold and heat with equal fortitude; but in the latter case, without abundance of water, he is soon overcome. Unlike a sombre apathetic Osmanli, who, brave as he is, hates the regular military service, the Persian soldier is full of life and cheerfulness. Somewhat addicted to turbulence, he nevertheless always displayed the most complete submission to his English commanders, for whom he has ever had a special veneration. A most determined marauder, he sometimes enlists in the hope of plunder; this occurs particularly in Azerbijan. It is curious to see him returning from a campaign, himself and his faithful ass loaded with all sorts of household furniture, which they have brought perhaps from a distance of a thousand miles.

The unfortunate soldiers are enlisted for life, and generally by compulsion. They are drawn almost entirely from the wandering eelyats of Toork and Lek tribes, and from the ordinary peasantry. The eelyats have the reputation of being the best soldiers, though, in my opinion, undeservedly. The best regiments are those composed of the above classes indiscriminately. A pernicious habit has been introduced of organizing regiments in tribes, by which means clannish feelings have been nurtured, and in such

* Whoever reads the History of the Wars of Nadir will form a different estimate of the Persian soldier from the above excellent writer.

cases collisions between rival septs and regiments require to be guarded against.

As before said, the flower of the Persian army is drawn from Azerbijan. Less compulsion is necessary to obtain recruits in that province than in any other part of the kingdom. The eelyats of Kermanshah have also a high reputation, and, above all, the regiments from the two famous Lek tribes of Kelhor and Goorān, which were at one time commanded by Sir Henry Rawlinson. I have seldom seen finer-looking soldiers than those of Kelhor.

As the Persian soldier is good, so the officers are the reverse. Excepting those of the artillery and the few now remaining who have undergone English instruction, they are worthless. Favour and bribery are the groundwork of promotion. A person who has passed forty or fifty years of life in pursuits wholly unmilitary is suddenly metamorphosed into a full colonel or brigadier, occasionally into a general, or even into a commander-in-chief. The other ranks are filled in much the same manner. In the tribe regiments the position in the clan establishes the rank in the regiment.

The artillery amounts to about 6000 men, of whom nearly half are from Azerbijan. The last-named body is incomparably the best corps in the service, still preserving the traces of Lindsay Sahib. They are soldierly, active, workmanlike fellows, who take their guns anywhere. They are all mounted, it being the practice to station upwards of 30 men to each gun, who are to defend as well as fight it. I remember on one occasion seeing 30 guns moving out of camp on some expedition, accompanied by a battalion of 800 men. A Russian general looking on expressed his amazement that so many pieces of artillery should have so few infantry for their defence. He was not aware that in Persia it is the artillery that is expected to defend the infantry.

It is to the English nation that the Persian Government is indebted for all its materials of war. Under the instruction of English artificers, a foundry was established at Tabreez, where guns and shot of every description were cast, gun-carriages were built, musket-ammunition prepared,

harness worked; and outside the town an efficient powder-mill was constructed, where good service-powder is manufactured at the cost of fourpence a pound. These warlike appurtenances were transferred to Tehran, where they still are in operation.

The regular infantry is nominally rated at more than 100,000 men; but what with false returns, incomplete regiments, and men on leave who never return, the number does not in reality exceed 70,000. Of the above number, no less than 25,000 are taken from the martial province of Azerbijan.

Internal discipline may be said to have no existence in the Persian army; parade discipline does not extend much beyond the knowledge of getting from column into line, and the reverse, with some awkward attempts at the formation of a square.

All these troops are armed with flint muskets and bayonets, chiefly English. The greater part of these arms may be pronounced to be in an inefficient state. The men are clothed in blue linen jackets supplied by the state, under which in cold weather their own clothes are crammed: large white cotton trousers and lapcheens, a sort of soft leather buskin which laces halfway up the leg and is admirably adapted for marching in dry weather, complete their dress. The Toork soldier wears on his head the ordinary lambskin cap; the Leks wear brown nemed or felt caps. Knapsacks are not carried in the Persian army; thirty asses per company are the substitute for that article. Tents are allowed to the regiments.

Persia has preceded Turkey in introducing Christians into her army. For several years there has been a regiment of Nestorian Christians of Ooroomeeya in the Shah's service. Many among them are Armenians, notwithstanding the total absence of military qualities in that race.

The nations of the East are thoroughly satisfied of the superiority of regular infantry. Many years ago, when travelling in Koordistan, I passed through the Koordish principality of Suleimaneeya. The chief had raised a body of 200 infantry from his tribe, armed with muskets. He

was very proud of these "regular troops," as he called them. He boasted of an action he had just fought with a rival tribe, in which his infantry had fired a volley and killed a number of the enemy while making a charge. He treated with contempt the idea of regular cavalry. No brave horseman, this chief said, would submit to be so controlled.

The pay of a private soldier is 7 tomans or about 3*l.* 10*s.* a year, besides a ration of about 3½ lbs. of bread daily. A battalion of 850 privates is estimated to cost about 15,000 tomans or 7500*l.* annually; but from the incompleteness of the regiments, the real expenditure is much less.

The cavalry of Persia is a numerous body, and, in fact, its numbers are dependent only on the means of payment.

The regular cavalry consists of 500 hussars, supposed to be like the Hungarian troops of the same kind. They are an absurd useless body.

The Shah's body-guard of irregular cavalry consists of 2500 men. They are well mounted and armed, and excellent horsemen.

The irregular cavalry is raised almost entirely among the tribes. Azerbijan supplies 6000 of these horsemen.

Since the introduction of Nizam, or disciplined troops, the Persian cavalry has lost the reputation it formerly held. Fetteh Ali Shah broke down the tribe system as much as lay in his power, by which means, if internal tranquillity was better secured, the power of resisting foreign aggression was proportionally diminished. The breed of horses has been thereby deteriorated, the great khans of the eelyats have disappeared, and with them the numerous studs which they maintained.

If the Persian cavalry has fallen from its ancient fame, it is nevertheless considered more than a match for Turkish troops of the same description, and fully equal to the Cossacks of the Russian army. I have heard that in the last war the Persian horse never shunned an encounter with the Cossacks, above all with those of the Don, though they were wholly incapable of contending with Russian dragoons.

Note on the Persian Revenue.

Low state of the revenue of Persia — System of the late Shah — Taxes — Expenditure — Revenue from the principal provinces — Cultivation of land — Causes of the decline of Persia.

The sinews of war are on an exceedingly low scale in Persia. Extensive as are the Shah's dominions, equal to nearly twice the size of France, his income is less than that of the smallest kingdom in Europe. At the first view of its amount, one is surprised at the success of that Government in maintaining a regal state, not only in the capital, but also its semblance in the chief provinces. An army of 150,000 men would seem to be far beyond its powers, exclusive of demands in the shape of pensions, the clerical establishment, the overwhelming offspring of the Shah's great-grandfather, and a variety of other heavy items of expenditure. The scarcity of money, and consequent cheapness of labour, food, and of all native productions, afford the only explanation of this problem. The expenditure of the late Shah far exceeded his income. It was totally out of his Majesty's power to borrow money from his own subjects; one unfortunate merchant at Tabreez having lent him 30,000 tomans at a moment of great need, he being then a claimant for the crown, his Majesty forgot to repay the debt when he mounted the throne. Persia has no standing in the loan-market, so the Shah had recourse to a species of bank-note system. He issued berāts or bills on the provincial treasuries in payment of his army, his servants, and other creditors. But as the issues of berāts exceeded tenfold the amount of the revenue, none but a favoured few, or those who bribed highly, received payment; and his Majesty's credit underwent a rude shock. The berāts varied in value, according to the position of the holder, from zero to par. The latter was its worth when held by a European consul in favour of one of his trading countrymen; the former when the payee was a friendless Persian.

This system was a mine of wealth to the provincial governors. They bought the bills from the payees, who were in general happy to receive 10 or 20 per cent. of their amount, and charged them to the Shah at the full sum in the accounts of the disbursements of their province. When the late king died, all the outstanding bills were declared null and void, a step which greatly relieved the Persian exchequer. His present Majesty has made a fresh start on the road of probity. Economy is cultivated, the soldiers and servants are paid, and efforts are made to restrain the expenditure within the limits of the income of the state.

The principal source of the revenue of Persia is derived from the land-tax. The rate is not uniform, different assessments having been made at various periods, more or less remote, since which time great changes have taken place in the lands assessed. The average is supposed to be about 20 per cent. on the gross produce, although in some districts it amounts to even 30. Besides this impost there are taxes on gardens, vineyards, shops, melon, cotton, rice, and tobacco grounds, sheep, asses, buffaloes, bullocks, camels, wells, kanāts, mills, which vary in the different provinces and even districts, not only in amount but in the nature of the object taxed. In one province there is a poll-tax for males above fourteen years of age, which in another province is substituted by a house, or, as it is called, a door-tax, and again in another neither of these imposts is levied. In many districts no revenue whatever is levied, the land being held free on a sort of feudal tenure in requital of military service; in general the tent-dwelling eels pay no tax on land, the quantity cultivated by those tribes being small. Another and considerable source of exemption from taxation is land which has been made wakf, that is, dedicated to religious purposes, such as land attached to mosques.

Altogether the system is not free from complication, and requires all the ingenuity of the Persian Chancellor of the Exchequer to unravel it.

It is conjectured that through the extortions of governors and their subordinates, chiefs of districts, villages, mohessils, or tax-gatherers, the ryots pay double the amount of

their assessments, no part of which excess reaches the Shah's treasury.

The revenue is paid part in money and part in kind, consisting of wheat, barley, rice, chaff, or chopped straw.

To make the following statements intelligible, it is necessary to explain that a toman is roughly estimated at about ten shillings sterling, and that a kherwar is equal to 650 lbs., or 6 cwt.

Four years ago the total revenue in money amounted to 2,677,000 tomans.

The income produced by wheat and barley reached 245,237 kherwars, which is rated, on an average, at 2 tomans a kherwar. It is sometimes compounded for in money, but not generally.

Rice produced 4487 kherwars, at the average valuation of 2 tomans a kherwar.

Chaff for horses amounted to 10,895 kherwars, which is valued at 3 kerans, or shillings, each kherwar.

The grain not compounded for in money is generally expended in rations to soldiers, provisioning the Shah's camp, and so forth.

If the value of the revenue paid in kind be estimated in money, it amounts to something more than 500,000 tomans, which would make the total revenue of Persia ascend to about 3,177,000 tomans, or 1,588,000*l.*

Of this amount, no less a sum than 800,000 tomans is expended at the capital in salaries and allowances to the members of the different departments of the state and their subordinates, and to the other public servants, exclusive of the army. The following are a few of these items, which in the public accounts are classed as amelajāt:—

	Tomans.
The Prime Minister of England receives 5000*l.* a-year, but in Persia the salary of the same office, exclusive of other emoluments, which treble the income, is ..	42,000
Allowances to the numerous royal family	257,126
Khans and nobles	98,276
Arbab e Kallem—lords of the pen	18,110
Ulema, moollas, syeds, &c.	4,110
Physicians, poets, interpreters, &c.	18,843

Salaries of the attendants in the royal stables for camels, horses, mules, including fodder	17,540
Khans of the royal tribe (kajār)	21,302
Refugees from Georgia and Russian Armenia and Herat	77,597
Master of ceremonies and attendants of the presence	18,428
Attendants of the Deewān Khāna, or court of justice	2,764
Tutors and attendants of the Dār ool foonoon ve ooloom, or seat of arts and sciences	7,750
Loss of revenue by the transfer of two villages to the ministers of England and Russia for their summer residence	143
Musketeers of the Shah's own person	9,640
Gholam Peeshkhidmet, special mounted guards, and other mounted guards	103,549

I omit any mention of attendants and expenses connected with the Shah's own person for the maintenance of regal state; but I may mention that in proportion to the resources of Persia the expenditure is considerable.

To all the above receivers of salaries a certain portion of grain is also allotted.

The total expenditure from the net revenue of 2,677,000 tomans is summed up in the following manner:—

	Tomans.
General expenses, including presents, buildings, posting establishment, &c.	335,521
Amelajāt—salaries at the capital	805,985
Total military expenses	1,222,764
Provincial expenses (besides the ordinary provincial expenses not included in the net revenue)	292,331
	2,656,601

The balance, when there is any, is spent in various uncertain expenses, such as diamond-hilted swords, decorations, extraordinary military expenses caused by insurrection, &c.

The following is a statement of the revenue of the principal provinces of Persia, and will serve to show their comparative value. It is derived from an authentic source, as authentic, at least, as a Persian authority can be considered, and contains probably an approximation to the truth. The amount of revenue collected in grain is omitted, as being of less interest:—

	Tomans.
Khorassan—nett money revenue, after deducting provincial expenses	227,000
Azerbijan	620,000
Asterabad	23,000
Mazenderan	102,000
Geelan	238,000
Kerman	101,000
Isfahan	332,000
Hamadan	65,000
Kermanshah	79,000
Fars	403,000
Looristan and Arabistan	130,000
Ardelan (Koordistan)	32,000
Yezd	73,000
Tehran and adjacent districts	122,000
Casween, Khemseh, Gerroos, Taroom, Talighan ..	132,000
Central Irak, comprehending Kashan, Koom, Gelpaeegan, Sava, Melayer, &c.	312,000
	2,991,000

As the culture of land is the main prop of the Persian Government, it may not be irrelevant to state in connection with the revenue the manner in which cultivation is conducted, and the relation between landlord and tenant. There is no "fixity of tenure" in Persia established by law, though it exists to the fullest extent in the only way it ought to exist, the mutual benefit of the landlord and the tenant, and also by custom, which is nearly equivalent to law. In a thinly-peopled country like Persia, it is the interest of the landlord to conciliate his tenants and perpetuate their residence on his property. A landowner seldom farms his own estate; he generally lets it to tenants, or, more strictly speaking, a partnership is established between the latter and the landlord. The conditions of their compact, and the division of the produce, vary according to circumstances and to the capital contributed by each. When the proprietor furnishes all the capital—the soil, the seed, the bullocks, ploughs, and water—the gross produce is in general, for there are variations in the different provinces, divided in the following manner:—Out of 100 shares the Government takes 20, and the remaining 80 are divided equally by the landlord and his tenant. In Ooroomeeya the

landlord takes 10 shares besides, leaving 70 shares for division. When the tenant contributes bullocks and ploughs, as often happens, or seed, which he occasionally does, his share is, of course, large in proportion.

Landlords treat their tenants well, which it is obviously their interest to do. It is from teeool-holders, mohessils, and irregular arbitrary taxation, that the peasantry suffer vexation and extortion. A teeool-holder is a person who receives his salary by an assignment on the assessment of a village. Having no interest in its prosperity, his only care is to exact all he can from the ryots. A mohessil is a tax-gatherer.

The following extracts of a letter, addressed by me to a person of distinction in Persia, exhibits some of the evils of Persian administration:—

"Persia was once a great and powerful kingdom. Why has it ceased to be so? With every natural advantage, a fine climate, a fruitful soil, an active and intelligent population, why has Persia not only stood still, but even declined, while other nations are fast increasing in power and resources. I will not quote India, with its immense army, its enormous commerce, its railways, its telegraphs. Turkey, however, is a fair parellel with Persia, from the similarity of manners, religion, and race. A few years ago they were both in the same condition; but at this moment there is as much difference between the two countries as there is between Turkey and one of the great powers of Europe. There must be a reason for the decay visible in Persia, and that reason can only be found in bad government—bad government in civil affairs and bad government in the affairs of the army. Unless there be security in life and property—if both the one and the other are at the nod of arbitrary power—a nation may exist, but it can never prosper, never advance.

"A national reform is a work of time and of gradual amelioration; but there are some flagrant abuses, the immediate correction of which would be a boon to the people, and greatly strengthen the power of the Government.

"The sources of vexation and oppression which touch

most nearly the population at large, particularly the peasant class, are perhaps the mohessil (tax-collector) and seoorsat (provisions levied from the people gratuitously). Almost every transaction of the Government is performed through a mohessil, and every mohessil is a tyrant, an oppressor—in general a thorough ruffian. The Shah sends his mohessil to the governor of the province, the latter thereupon despatches his mohessil to the governor of towns and districts, and then finally to each separate village. It is here at its lowest stage that the system works so grievously. The mohessil makes himself lord and master of the village, and every one bows down to his caprices. It is true, I know, that the Persian peasant pays his taxes with hesitation, and that compulsion is often necessary to enforce payment. But what is the cause of this reluctance? He fears, if he did not counterfeit poverty and inability to meet the demands made on him, he would be thought rich, and become a mark for extortion. Let him but feel secure from arbitrary exaction, and it will be his interest to pay his taxes without delay.

"The gratuitous distribution of food, or seoorsat,* is another fruitful source of oppression. It is true that some allowance is pretended to be made to the villagers, but it is never adequate, and is no compensation for the violence and oppression which attends the exaction of seoorsat. The above mohessils are among the great offenders, for every one of them must be supplied according to his caprices. But it is a governor or other functionary travelling to his post who is a scourge to the peasantry.

"The remedy for all this extortion should come from the Shah's example. When the sovereign travels let him renounce seoorsat, and let him pay for every article he consumes, and force his retinue to do the same. If there should be any exception, it should be only in favour of regiments on the march; though even then the abuse is enormous, and the colonel and officers are the greatest plunderers.

* Seoorsat means provisions supplied at villages nominally on account of government to certain travellers, such as elchees, governors, public servants, government messengers, &c.

"The issue of berāts, or Government bills, payable in the provinces, which are again made payable in the districts, should cease, because it is a perpetuation of the mohessil system. Berāts generally require the despatch of mohessils for the collection of the money, and thence follows the perpetuation of that voracious tribe, more destructive to the welfare of Persia than the locusts which afflict it.

"The salaries of governors of provinces, towns, and districts, are absurdly large in proportion to the revenue of Persia. The governors of provinces seem to have salaries on the same scale as the Governor General of India.

"When governors travel from one part of their province to another, besides the seoorsat already alluded to, the inhabitants suffer enormously from the obligation of making him large presents throughout his progress. With his exorbitant income, why should the people be loaded with this irregular taxation?

"The Shah is a heavy loser from the silly practice of the Government functionaries, high and low, keeping in their service a rabble of attendants, and ostentatiously parading about the streets with a crowd of followers. Why should the Sedr Azim appear with a retinue of two or three hundred persons, and every one else in proportion, down to the pettiest meerza? This class of persons, besides being the most dissolute and extortionate of all Persia, are withdrawn from their proper sphere of artisans and peasants. Their payment, too, falls on the people. Their masters seldom give them wages, and they remunerate them by letting them loose on the population as mohessils."

Note on Tribes.

Tribes and races — Leks and Koords — Arabs — Decline of the tribe system — Enumeration of tribes.

Persia is overrun with tribes. If both the wandering and the stationary clans be taken into calculation, it may be questioned if the eels do not equal in number the other portion of the inhabitants of that country.

The tribes are divided into three races—Toorks, Leks, and Arabs. The first are the invaders from Toorkistan, who, from time immemorial, have established themselves in Persia, and who still preserve their language. The Leks form the clans of genuine Persian blood, such as the Loors, Bekhtiarees, &c. To them might be added the Koords, as members of the Persian family; but their numbers in the dominions of the Shah are comparatively few, the greater part of that widely-spread people being attached to Turkey. Collectively the Koords are so numerous that they might be regarded as a nation divided into distinct tribes.

Who are the Leks, and who are the Koords? This inquiry I cannot solve. I never met any one in Persia, either eel or moolla, who could give the least elucidation of this question. All they could say was, that both these races were Foors e kadeem,—old Persians. They both speak dialects the greater part of which is Persian, bearing a strong resemblance to the colloquial language of the present day, divested of its large Arabic mixture. These dialects are not perfectly alike, though it is said that Leks and Koords are able to comprehend each other. One would be disposed to consider them as belonging to the same stock, did they not both disavow the connection. A Lek will admit that a Koord, like himself, is an "old Persian," but he denies that the families are identical, and a Koord views the question in the same light.

The natives on the flat coast of the Persian Gulf are chiefly descendants of Arab settlers from the opposite shore, whose language they speak, but who cannot properly be called eels. They are stationary communities on a great length of coast, bound together by the ordinary ties of locality, race, and language. But in various parts of the interior of Persia there are tribes who preserve the appellation of Arab, derived, no doubt, from the Arabian conquerors, or from subsequent immigrants. These eels have, however, become complete Persians, and have preserved no trace of their origin either in language or appearance.

The tent-dwelling eel is to be recognised by his bold and manly air and his free and independent look. All the

great robber tribes are Persian: not that the Toorks do not rob also, but among the former it is their trade, profession, and occupation. Thus the Loors, Bekhtiarees, Kakawends, Mamasenees, are Persian tribes and desperate marauders. As before said, a Toork is to be distinguished by his grave, manly, rugged air. The Lek is known by his wild, restless, ferocious look; I have heard them compared to wild cats, and there is truth in the observation.

The habits engendered by a wandering life, living in communities separated from the ordinary portion of the population, and presided over by great nobles, whose commands, either for aggression against their neighbours or resistance to the law, were readily obeyed by the turbulent clansmen, are unfavourable to internal tranquillity. Thus, after the overthrow of the dynasty of the Seffees by the Afghans, each succession to the throne became the signal for convulsion. The great lords of the eelyats did their utmost to perpetuate a system which secured to them consideration, power, and independence. Fetteh Ali Shah was a luxurious monarch, but he was a man of penetration and sagacity who thoroughly understood his countrymen. All his energy was devoted to the overthrow of the tribe system, or, at least, to render it harmless. Many of the chiefs were put to death, others were brought to court; some tribes were broken up and incorporated in various clans, others were removed from their original seats. The result has been that at this day, excepting the chief of the great tribe of Kashkaï, in Fars, and of Zaferanloo, in Khorassan, few of the chiefs or tribes are able to exercise a preponderating influence in the affairs of the country.

Now that regular armies and an overwhelming force in artillery are the order of the day, the tribe system is a failure, unless in supplying recruits, in which respect, however, the ordinary population is not inferior. The eelyat horsemen might be employed like the Cossacks, and, in an occupation so congenial to their nature, in proper hands they might be made as useful as those irregular troops, to whom they believe themselves fully a match.

Among the Toork tribes Turkish is the prevailing language, to which they often add Persian. The Lek tribes speak their own dialect, besides either Persian or Turkish, according to locality.

The following enumeration of tribes is derived from a variety of sources. As these sources are entirely Persian, there are, no doubt, many errors, and I am equally certain that the enumeration of the clans is by no means exhausted.

The stationary eels are termed either Tāts, or Takhteh Kāpoo; the latter term implies that their doors are made of wood, that is, that they live in houses. They are also termed Deh nisheen, which means village-dwellers.

The cool summer residences of the tribes are called Yēlāk, the winter abodes are named Kishlak. They are Turkish words.

TRIBES OF AZERBIJAN.

Shaheeseven—10,000 tents. Toorks. Live in Mishkeen, Ardebil.
Sheghaghee—15,000 houses and tents. Leks.
Zerger—400 tents. Leks.
Chelebeeānloo—1500 tents and houses.
Koolbegloo and Mishkamber—400 tents and houses. } Leks. Reside in Karadāgh.
Karachoorloo—2500 tents and houses.
Khajeh Alīloo—800 tents and houses.
Beg Dilloo—200 tents and houses. } Toorks. Live in Karadāgh.
Shekloo—150 tents and houses.
Mookaddam—5000 houses. Tāts. Toorks. Live at Maragha.
Mahmoudloo—2500 houses. Chiefly Tāts. Toorks. Live near Maragha.
Beharloo—2000 houses. Chiefly Tāts. Toorks.
Afshar—7000 houses. Tāts. Toorks. Live in Ooroomeeya.
Ahmedawend—200 houses. Tāts. Leks. Live in Ooroomeeya.
Kara Papakh—1500 houses. Tāts. Toorks. Live in Sooldooz.
Doombelli—2000 houses. Tāts. Leks.
Mikree—15,000 houses and tents. Koords. Reside in Sowj Boolak, in Azerbijan. These Koords are completely subject to Persia.
Bābān—1500 houses and tents. Koords. Live at Sooldooz.

Tribes in Mazenderan.

Kajjar—2000 houses.
Abdool Melekee—600 tents and houses. Leks.
Khajehwend—400 tents and houses. Leks.
Janbegloo—50 houses. Toorks.
Imamloo—50 houses. Toorks.
Oosanloo—50 houses. Toorks.
Afshar—100 houses. Toorks.

TRIBES OF TEHRAN, &c.

Shaheeseven—9000 tents. Toorks. Dispersed over a large tract, according to the season, between Koom, Tehran, Casveen, Zenjan.

Kharehkanloo, Bajmānloo, Koondeshloo, Khellij, Khoda Bendehloo, are eels living in the town of Tehran. 400 houses. Toorks.

Afshar—900 tents and houses. Toorks. Live between Tehran and Cazveen.

Toork e Māfee—100 houses and tents. Toorks and Leks.

Paecrewend, Jelleelawend, Kakawend, Gheeasawend, Chegeence—500 tents and houses, but chiefly houses. Leks. Live near Cazveen.

Hedawend, Boorboor, Sylsepoor,—1000 tents and houses. Leks.

Arabs of Demawend, Kengerloo Toorks and Leks, Kara Choorloo,—1000 tents and houses.

Pazekee—2000 tents and houses. Toorks and Leks.

Arab—2000 tents and houses.

Kellehkooh, Gāvbāz,—150 houses. Toorks.

Zerger—600 tents. Leks. Are reputed as thieves and coiners.

Fooyooj—300 tents near Tehran. Toorks. A base tribe: are thieves and fortune-tellers: very poor. Dispersed all over Persia.

Koord Bacheh—400 tents. Leks.

Abul Hassanee, Jehan Begloo, Shadloo,—320 tents and houses. Toorks.

Shah Servaree—250 tents. Leks. Live to the south of Tehran.

Nana Kellee—650 tents. Leks. Live to the south of Tehran.

Oosanloo—1000 tents and houses. Toorks. Live at Khar and Demawend.

Mafee (including Pyrawend, Haroonawend, Shooeerawend, Shahverdeeawend, Aspanawend)—1000 houses. Leks. Live near Cazween.

TRIBES OF KHEMSEH (a district between Tehran and Tabreez, of which the capital is Zenjān).

Gerroos. A large tribe of Toorks. 4000 or 5000 houses.
Shaheeseven e Afshar—2500 tents. Toorks.
Reshwend—300 tents. Leks.
Khoda Bendehloo—600 houses.
Dodangeh—150 houses.
Zoolkader—200 houses.
Mookadem—150 houses.
Afshar—200 houses.
Koortbegloo—1500 houses.
Toorks.

All the tribes of Khemseh live in houses in winter, the cold being severe. In summer they live in tents, and do not wander far.

Tribes of Kerman.

Afshār—1500 houses. Toorks.
Karāee—700 houses. Toorks.
Ata Illahee—3000 tents and houses. Leks.
Khoormalbend—100 tents. Leks.
Leestanee—150 houses. Belooches. Live in Bemm and Nermansheer.

Tribes of Hamadan, Mellayer, Toosirkan, Ferahan, &c., in Irak.

Karagiuzloo—4000 houses. Toorks.
Zehrawend, *Keeasawend*, *Jeleelawend*, *Paerawend*,—1500 tents and houses. Leks.
Zend—100 houses and tents. Leks.
Khellij. A large tribe of Toorks.

Tribes of Fars.

Tribes in Sheerat and the vicinity.

Feilee—100 houses. Leks. Persian and Lek.
Byāt—120 houses. Toorks.
Bergooshadee—50 houses. Toorks.
Goorrānee—100 houses. Leks.
Kajar Afshar. A mixed tribe of Toorks and Leks. Toorks 250 houses; Leks 100 houses.
Abulverdee—300 tents. Are smugglers engaged in trade.
Tewellellee—40 houses. Toorks. Cultivators.
Ameleh—40 houses. Toorks. Cultivators.
Goorrānee—300 tents and houses. Leks.
Nana Kellee—60 tents. Leks.
Shaheeseven—60 tents. Toorks.
Dehboozoorgee—100 houses. Leks.
Zerger. Leks. *Kara Goozloo*. Toorks. 100 houses.
Basilee—3300 tents. Are of Arab descent.
Arab—7300 tents (divided into 41 branches).
Kāshkāï—30,000 or 40,000 tents. Toorks. Is composed of various clans, who have joined together and formed this large tribe. The principal branch of this great tribe is called Ameleh, consisting of 3300 tents, presided over by the Eelkhanee, chief or lord of the eels. Being so powerful, the Kāshkāï are able to select their own

pasture-grounds: their yēlāk or summer residence ranges as far as the frontier of Ispahan at Gendooman. Many of the clans dwell in winter on the germseer or low flat land on the coast. Some go to Laristan and Deshtee. Several of the clans dwell among the Bakhtiarees near the great mountains of Jānikee, particularly the great mountain Pādinā, which is always covered with snow. The Kāshkāï thus range over a great extent of country, doing great injury in their movements. They are rich in flocks and herds.

Mamasennee—8000 tents and houses. Leks. Are a most lawless tribe. They live to the west of Cazeroon. Some years ago they were a powerful clan, but they have been reduced of late. About twenty years ago a body of these Mamasennees were besieged by a force consisting of regular troops from Azerbijan. Rather than fall into the hands of these Toorks, the women, said to be nearly 100 in number, threw themselves over the precipice with their children, and were dashed to pieces.

The enumeration of the Teerehs, or branches of the Kāshkāï and Mamasennee, is omitted as being tedious.

Inānloo—4800 tents and houses. Toorks. Live in Darab and Fessa.

TRIBES OF BEHBIHAN AND KOHGILOOYA.

Bewee—1200 tents.
Kohmerree—800 tents. } Live near the Mamasennees.

Boveïr—2000 tents.
Chooroom—1000 tents. } Live in Kohgilooya. Broken down tribe.

Nooee—1000 tents. Broken down.

Dooshmen Zeearee—500 tents.

Yoosoofee—400 tents.

Tyebbee—1000 tents. A rich tribe.

Behmaee—2500 tents.

Sheer Ali.
Shehrooee.
Mālahmedee. } —1000 tents. Live between Ram Hoomuh and Sheerter.

Aghajeree.
Jughataï.
Keshteel. } —1000 tents. Rich.

Teelehkoohee.
Beelehloo.
Jameh Boozoorgee. } —1000 tents. Leks.

Nefer—850 tents. Toorks. Roam through different parts of Fars.

Beharloo—1230 tents. Toorks.

TRIBES OF LARISTAN.

Mezaïjan. This is the name of a place, and gives the name to the tribe. 300 tents. Rich in flocks and herds. The lambskins of Fars come from hence.

Jahoomee—60 tents.

Bekir—500 tents.

KHORASSAN.

Toorbet e Sheikh Jam.

Jāme e Jam is the name of a district on the eastern frontier, of which the capital is Toorbet e Sheikh Jam. 250 houses. Speak Persian.

Khaff, Tymooree—4000 tents and houses. Language Persian. Live at Khaff.

Toorbet Hydereeya.

Karāee—5000 tents and houses.
Belooch—2000 tents and houses.
Leks—1000 tents and houses.
Miscellaneous—2000 tents and houses.
} All speak Persian.

Toorsheez district and town contains—

Arab—4000 houses and tents.
Belooch—2000 tents and houses.
} Language Persian.

Toon and Tebbes, names of two districts, whose chief towns are of the same name.

Arab e Reiyoonee—7000 houses and tents. Language Persian.

Kaën, name of district and town.

Arab—12,000 houses and tents.
Nekhee—number not known.
} Language Persian.

Serheddāt, meaning the tribes on the frontiers of Meshed.

Tymooree—2000 tents and houses. Live at Kezghoon.
Merdee—700 houses. Toorks. Are dispersed in various places.
Moozdoorānee—130 houses. Language Persian. Live at Pery Best, 20 miles from Meshed.
Choolāee—2000 houses and tents. Toorks.
Toorkeaya Jelayer—1500 houses. Toorks. Live at Kelat e Nadiree.
Leks and others—1500 houses and tents.
Toorkeeya Janishloo—3000 tents and houses. Leks.
Lek and other tribes—2500 tents and houses.

Beyat and Khoorshāhee—10,000 houses. Toorks. They live at Nishaboor.

Miscellaneous—1000 houses. Live in Subsewar. Language Turkish.
Kelijeï—2000 houses. Toorks. Live in the district of Jowēn.
Zuferanloo—14,000 houses and tents. Leks. Live at Koochan.
Kywanloo—2000 houses and tents. Leks. Live at Radkan.
Shadloo—3000 houses and tents. Leks. Live at Borjnoord.
Amanloo—1500 houses and tents. Leks. Live at Merdeshk.

My informant says that the Arab tribes in Khorassan speak Arabic; still, I think, he must be in error.

Tribes of Kermanshah.

Goorān—3300 houses and tents. Leks.
Kelhor—11,500 houses and tents. Leks. The women are handsome, the men tall and strong and excellent marksmen.*
Zengeneh—10,000 houses and tents. Leks. The Sinjabees, a lawless tribe, are a branch of Zengeneh—2000 houses.
Jelālawend—300 houses and tents. Leks.
Balawend., *Penjeenawend.*—1000 houses and tents. Leks. Robust and tall.
Zobeirawend—1000 houses and tents. Leks.
Kakawend—2000 tents and houses. Leks.
Herseenee—400 houses. Leks.
Jelcelawend., *Zoolch.*, *Miscellaneous.*—600 houses and tents. 250 are Leks. 1200.
Nana Kellee—700 tents. Leks.
Ahmedawend., *Pyrawend.*, *Bahtooee.*—750 houses and tents. Leks.
Feelehgeree., *Soofehwend.*, *Vernezyar.*—2000 houses and tents. Leks in the district of Kooleeaeen.
Khodabendehloo—200 houses. Toorks.
Koozeeawend—1500 tents. Leks.

The above list of the tribes of Kermanshah is the one to which I can least trust. The clans are so numerous in that province that a Persian could hardly enumerate them without committing many errors.

The tribes in the district of Zohab are not included in the above.

Looristan is divided into Great and Little Looristan. The former is inhabited by the large tribe of Bakhtiaree, containing many thousand tents and houses. There are two great branches of this clan, named Cheharleng and Heftleng, of which the subdivisions are numerous. The other tribes of Great Looristan are named Deenaranee and Janekee. All the tribes in Looristan are Leks.

* The tribes of Goorān and Kelhor are sometimes called Koords. My informant says, however, that they are positively Leks.

The following are only a few of the tribes of Little Looristan:—

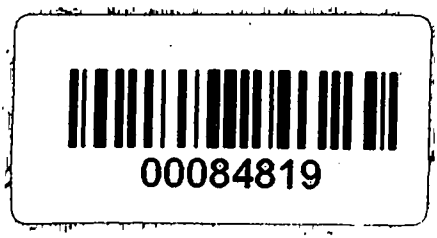
Gerawend—1500 tents.
Jelalawend—1500 tents.
Osmanawend—1800 tents.
Shakhawend—700 tents.
Balawend—1800 tents.
Veeranawend—600 tents.
Delfān—12,000 tents.
Feilee—12,000 tents.
Habeebawend—1500 tents.
Seelaseel—a large tribe.
Amaleh.
Bajelān.

} Leks.

Ardelan is a province on the west of Persia, inhabited almost exclusively by Koords, who during the last and the present reign have been completely reduced to subjection.

THE END.

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